ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: FITNESS PHILANTHROPY, FAILED STATES, AND PHYSICAL CULTURAL FISSURES: THE PROBLEM OF ADDRESSING "URBAN" YOUTH IN BALTIMORE

Ronald Lee Mower, Doctor of Philosophy, 2014

Directed by: Professor David L. Andrews, Department of Kinesiology

Situated within a severely polarized Baltimore City, this dissertation explores the increasing role of voluntary organizations in addressing health disparities and various "crises" commonly associated with the "urban" environment (juvenile delinquency, crime, poverty, and ill-health). Given renowned cultural geographer, David Harvey's (2001) proclamation that Baltimore is a city "emblematic of the processes that have moulded cities under US capitalism" (p. 7), the rise of privatized voluntarism reflects a distinct shifting of responsibility inherent to neoliberalization processes. The failures of the state in providing adequate public resources for physical activity and health for example, has resulted in more private citizens deploying their educational and professional expertise, wealth and spare time, and creative ambitions to intervene in ways they deem most appropriate. Amidst an effort to map the broad structures of racial and class inequality shaping Baltimore's divisive environments, the specific focus of this project entailed a close ethnographic engagement with one non-profit organization that sought to reform the health and fitness lifestyles of "at-risk" and underserved African American youth between 2008 and 2012.

As a participant observer, I examined the everyday operation of fitness pedagogies, disciplinary structures, and power relations between wealthy, white philanthropists and middle class fitness professionals ("faculty"), and the underserved working class black youth ("students") they attempted to instruct about fitness and health. Employing what Wolcott (2008) defined as the ethnographic methods of *experiencing* and *inquiring*, I observed and spoke with people concerning their perceptions of fitness and health, and their experiences within the program. I also *examined* programmatic documents from several fitness-based non-profit organizations across Baltimore. Issues of white privilege, philanthropic intent, colormuteness, and the normalization of neoliberal healthism emerged as key findings. As an embodied participant, I also encountered scenarios that challenged my habitual ability to cross the racial and class boundaries typified by the positionalities and lived experience of faculty and students. Having been reared in, and routinely experienced, such divisions in my own life, the performative politics of embodiment became an important point of analysis to make sense of my cultural "betweenness" (England, 1994), and the role that self-reflexive writing practices played during fieldwork.

FITNESS PHILANTHROPY, FAILED STATES, AND PHYSICAL CULTURAL FISSURES: THE PROBLEM OF ADDRESSING "URBAN" YOUTH IN BALTIMORE

by

Ronald Lee Mower

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
2014

Advisory Committee:

Dr. David Andrews, Professor, Chair
Dr. Sandra Quinn, Professor, Dean's Representative
Dr. Shannon Jette, Assistant Professor
Dr. Michael Friedman, Research Assistant Professor
Dr. Stephen Roth, Professor

DEDICATION

To Evelyn and Jamie, in my heart always…

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The culmination of this project represents much more than four years of academic research and writing. For me, it represents a process of struggle, of conflicting allegiances, divergent ways of thinking and being, and the finding of courage to define for myself what kind of citizen, scholar, and person I want to be. A number of people must be acknowledged in helping me along the way. First and foremost, I owe a tremendous debt of thanks to my advisor and mentor Dr. David L. Andrews for not only guiding this dissertation project, but for facilitating my very presence within academia. Intent on pursuing strength and conditioning as a career path within Kinesiology, the thought of becoming a critical teacher-scholar of physical culture never entered my mind until I took Dr. Andrews' course *KNES287: Sport and American Society*. It was a crucial turning point in my life. The passions I had long held for social justice were brilliantly articulated within his critical analyses of the sport—society dialectic, and I was immediately enthralled. Dr. Andrews was also the first person to introduce the idea of graduate school, showing support and confidence in my abilities that nobody had ever done previously. In short, I cannot fully express the gratitude I have for this man who believed in me enough to advocate for my graduate education, even when my GRE scores were less than desirable. I literally would not be here without him. His efforts changed my life, and I am beginning to see the kind of impact I have on my own students, their consciousness, and their ability to think critically about their place within society. The cycle of learning continues…

At the University of Maryland, I thank my committee—Dr. Michael Friedman, Dr. Shannon Jette, Dr. Stephen Roth, and Dr. Sandra Quinn—for their patience and support of this project. Also thanks to the Department of Kinesiology for my teaching assistantship, to Sally J. Phillips and Ann G. Wylie for my dissertation fellowships, and the faculty and staff

that facilitated my progress through the doctoral program and administrative tasks—Dr. Damion Thomas, Dr. Jamie Schultz, Dr. Jane Clark, Polly Sebastian, Regina Clary, Joanna Han, Jessica Duque, and Bianca Garcia. Many thanks also to Dr. Richard Southall and Dr. John Amis for their unwavering support of me during my Masters degree program at the University of Memphis.

For my PCS classmates, our Pecha Kuchas, Journal Clubs, NASSS travels, and that storied drive from Canada, I thank you for your friendship and time well spent. I loved my graduate experience and many of you are to thank for that, particularly Bryan Clift, Jake Bustad, Sam Bernstein, Joy Bauer, Ashley Gollman, James McBean, Oliver Rick, Callie Batts, Jamie DeLuca, Amber Wiest, and Jenny Collins. I also gained much from PCS graduates who preceded me, namely Dr. Ryan King-White, Dr. Josh Newman, and Dr. Jennifer Sterling.

Finally, many thanks to family and friends—Mom and Richard, Pops (RIP) and Grams Mower, Pops (RIP) and Grams Humphries, Dadio, Greig, Brian, Sondra, Heather and Macy, the Grays, The Humphries and Couches, Angie and kids, Michelle, Los, Al, Romane, Chris, Manny, Ratha, J, D Money, Fat Steve, Big Joe, my Ultra Kulture bruvas, the old NWP crew, and the 97' Untouchables—for contributing to the person that I am today, and the things I have been able to accomplish. I have never forgotten, and will continue to remember, how I got here and why I am doing this. Much love. To Wendy, my exquisite muse and PNC, thanks for encouraging me to finish, olive juice.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROLOGUE: *An introduction to a journey, 1981-*

Fitness philanthropy, failed states, and physical cultural fissures: The problem of addressing "urban" youth in Baltimore represents an arbitrary closure (Hall, 1992a) in my attempt to suture, through the practice of self-reflexive and embodied auto/ethnography (Giardina & Newman, 2011), 33 years of lived experience with nearly three years of ethnographic fieldwork in Baltimore, and within the BMoreFit program—a non-profit organization aimed at educating "at-risk" Baltimore youth about fitness and health. Immersed within social spaces, and contexts, that were already somewhat familiar to me, my efforts to conduct ethnographic research "in the yard" occasionally produced some discomforting blurring of the boundaries between my personal and academic lives. In as much as I have written and produced this account of my research encounters, increasingly focused on questioning the role of the researcher, I found that this process of writing as method (Richardson, 2000), of thinking reflexively, and accounting for the shared embodied interactions in producing particular outcomes, has also produced me, molding my sensibilities and aspirations as a burgeoning young scholar to connect the personal and the political within my work. A deeply contextual, self/reflexive, and more than likely, controversial project, the outcome of these research efforts is contained herein: an admittedly partial, radically contextual, theoretically diverse, and self/reflexive examination of embodied interactions within particular socially constructed spaces and systems of division. It traverses uncomfortable, and potentially incendiary, topics of physical cultural difference, but particularly those related to race and racism, white power and privilege, and philanthropic intentions within a neoliberalizing urban political economic context and culture of the individual, privatized body.

Importantly, this prologue is intended to contextualize why I chose the BMoreFit program as a site of analysis, and why auto/ethnographic methodologies became increasingly useful in my efforts to interpret and understand dialogic, embodied experience. While chapter four employs these methods more fully, providing reflexive accounts of shared engagement with BMoreFit participants, I also decided to move the more personal biographical reflections (originally in chapter four) to this prologue, in order to, in advance, provide the reader with a more explicit sense of my interpretive position in relation to issues of race, class, religion, health, and to a smaller extent, masculinity, that inform this project from start to finish. As such, and following Skinner (2003), the kind of impressionistic autoethnographic writing appearing within this dissertation, "begins with the self, with embedding the self before engaging relationally with the other" in order to "paint a composite picture" that is "uncertain, partial, and interpretive and seeks to be more evocative than accurate and representational" (p. 514). This method, while still emergent, and often contested as to its merit, analytical rigor, and validity, cannot be evaluated according to traditional social science criteria (Richardson, 2000). Rather than stake a claim to truth and scientific certainties, its purpose is a moral, political, and ethical one. As Denzin (2014) suggests, "experimental autoethnographic writing has ben closely connected to gender, race, family, nation, politics, capital, technology, critical social theory, and cultural criticism; that is, to debates over questions of knowledge, and its representation and presentation" (p. 71). In challenging the traditional conventions of conducting research on and about others, this method resists paradigmatic policing and the restrictive determinations of what counts as credible knowledge (Bochner, 2000).

With regard to evaluative scientific criteria then, Richardson suggests that, "evocative representations are a striking way of seeing through and beyond social scientific naturalisms.

Casting social science into evocative form reveals the rhetoric and the underlying labor of the production as well as social science's potential as a human endeavor because evocative writing touches us where we live, in our bodies" (2000, p. 11). It is thus not all about the 'facts' and validity of 'data' found within the research process, but the 'feelings' experienced within the Self, and with others, through shared embodied interaction; presented with adequate depth of evocative detail to allow the reader to feel (Bochner, 2000; Ellis, 2000; Richardson, 2000). Ellis (2000), Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, (2011) and Christians (2000) further suggest that criteria be based around *interpretive sufficiency* (depth, detail, emotionality, nuance, and coherence) and *authentic adequacy* (multivocal, morally discerning, socially transformative), which promotes the formation of critical consciousness and advances an ethic of care, and personal and communal responsibility (Denzin, 2014). I have thus sought to meet such criteria by exposing the polarized cultures of trauma in my own life, and articulating them to the conditions of social division encountered within BMoreFit.

As both a participant and performer, the use of my own body (the corporeal politics through which I express an identity and Self(s), in spaces of shared embodied interaction), has helped produce the very physical cultural contestations, discourses, ideologies, and embodied performances, of which, I have both experienced and written about (Giardina & Newman, 2011; Newman, 2011). More specifically, and with regard to reflexivity, Denzin & Lincoln (2000) suggest that amidst considerations of ontology, epistemology, methodology, and theory "stands the personal biography of the researcher, who speaks from a particular class, gender, racial, cultural, and ethnic community perspective" (p. 18). Reflective of the practice of "bricolage," or rather, the bricoleur, who uses the "means at hand" (Derrida, 1972, p. 255) to construct radical texts, including the biographical, contextual, and auto/ethnographic (Denzin, 2014; Kincheloe, 2001), I have therefore sought to critically

embed, and situate, my performative Self in relation to this project, through the production of reflexive autobiographical narratives.

Stories of Self-Reflexivity: Border crossing and dividing lines

In the sections of reflexive, evocative writing that follow, I offer grounded examples of performative embodiment and reflexive memory, meant to contextualize and represent the disjuncture's of my positional roles, throughout the entirety of this project. In other words, I have sought to predicate the interpretive process, by writing about formative biographical experiences, memories, and "epiphany moments" (Denzin, 2014) that not only shaped me personally, but also contoured my path towards academia, Physical Cultural Studies, and the BMoreFit program. In as much as the positionality, politics, and epistemology of the inquirer is of the upmost importance in explicating the performative dimensions of research practice, it is meaningful biographical experience that provides the subject matter for interpretive auto/ethnographic research (Denzin; 2014; Pelias, 2011).

Thus, the following narratives are methodological contemplations as much as they are biographical signposts of my interpretive process. However, this was not a simple thing to do. I would never have considered writing in this way, of engaging with autoethnographic methods, or seeking to exhume memory and lived experience, if I had pursued a topic of inquiry that did not require shared engagement within spaces and contexts that conflated, what I myself had perceived as, previously distinct compartmentalization's of my own identity, experience, and subjectivity. I had once been a personal trainer. I had once been a delinquent youth. I had once been overweight. I have become fit. I had once been an educational failure and lost cause. I am now nearing completion of a doctoral degree. I had once been a Mormon, albeit not by rational choice (baptized at age eight). I am now

unafraid to profess my agnosticism. Born into familial divisions of the white working class (mother and father) and middle class intelligentsia (stepfather), and raised within the communal divisions of the black working class and white middle class, I had once been a bulk trash/debris handler and am now a university professor.

While my embodied positionality linked me from birth to the power arrangements, politics, and privileges of whiteness, I purposefully immersed myself in the cultures of my ethnically diverse peers as a youth. There were a number of reasons for this; partly out of coincidence (living in the same neighborhood); partly because the practices, performances, and embodied politics of my peers resonated with my own sense of Self; and partly because, reflective of the counter-cultural, anti-establishment impulses I absorbed from my participation in hip-hop culture, I actively sought to counter the imposition of white middle class ethics and religious parochialism brought about by my mother's remarriage. Throughout these various positions, roles, and experiences, I did not expect the memories of them to be so starkly exhumed and conflated during the course of my active engagements with people from drastically polarized spaces of Baltimore City. My own betweenness (England, 1994), and duality of Self (Newman, 2011), surfaced within the course of engaging with personal trainers, underprivileged (delinquent) youth, fat bodies, fit bodies, educationally privileged philanthropists, educationally deprived recipients, and in general, the distinctive cultural chasms existing between middle class white adults and working class black American youth. Thus, in both poetic and narrative forms, I offer the following biographical reflections to better situate and contextualize my interpretive processes, and ethnographic engagements, with BMoreFit, from December 2009 to November 2012. Following Denzin (2014), I begin with the memories of a disjunctured childhood, seeking to connect my experiences of betweenness (England, 1994) and multiple identifications of

culture (Essed, 1994), to better elucidate my approach to this project, and how I inevitably encountered similar polarizations within BMoreFit.

Race, religion, and family: A schizophrenic childhood

In between two worlds
Chronic boundary crossing
Paternal and maternal grandparents
Families polarized, but civil
Teenage mom fell in with a "bad crowd"
I was the outcome
Wedding ceremony, I was there in-utero
Could I hear my paternal uncle's drunken toast?
Guests of the bride appalled
An omen of what was to come
Too different, too divided
Divorced before year one

An only child
Single mom
Forced to grow up fast
Always around adults
Saw more than I should have
Alcohol, drugs, and sex
Occasional violence
Counterbalanced by a religion
I had trouble buying
But it probably saved my life
Gave me guidance and direction
Mom had made a choice
She relinquished her rebellion
Born again and devoted
But I remain…divided

Dad says its ok
Mom says its not
Dad is voting Dukakis
Mom for Bush
A silly thing to cry about
But kids don't need a reason
From moral values, politics, and religion
They couldn't be more different
Products of their own families,
As clear as can be
But what does that make me?

*What the f**k about me?*

Uncertain and confused
I'll just do my own thing
Neighborhood kids
Took me under their wing
"Black is beautiful"
"Black is power"
showed me to see things differently
rich cultures and traditions
extended families
community and consciousness
a place I WANT to be
with my brothers from other mothers
God, it finally feels good to be me
To be called an exception
A "cool white boy" at that
product of lived experience
ran around wit the crew
but I'm also told…"you're not Black! That's not really you"
older white kids at school
make fun of my swag
until violence ensues…
I hate my "race"

"Move it Fat Boy": On the racialization of embodiment

Often ostracized on account of my weight, the vitriolic attacks I experienced in elementary and middle school were levied by a particular clique of sharp-tongued white boys from middle class families. Perhaps it was through the embodied pedagogies of their own parents that they viewed my fatness as unacceptable and worthy of rebuke. As a youth, I would sometimes sit by myself, thinking and believing, that, if I could just transform my physical body to be more lean and fit, life would be so much better for me. As if a physical, corporeal transformation was the only viable route through which my sense of self, my value and worth, could be enhanced. I can still remember the look of shock on my mother's face when I returned home, at age 9, from a summer spent almost entirely with my paternal grandparents (I had apparently gained a lot of weight). I was their only grandchild. My mother had warned them not to spoil me (a belief instilled by her own parents' religious

conservatism and hard work-ethic) or else she would no longer permit them to pick me up to spend time with my father's side of the family. Instead of toys or gifts that would implicate their lack of compliance to this request, I got food.

For over 40 years, my grandparents owned a small family-operated bakery in the Four Corners area near downtown Silver Spring, MD. They loved to feed people, and more importantly, to see them happy through the act of consumption. For my body and health however, it was a recipe for disaster. Not necessarily due to my increased corporeal opulence, but for the eating habits and sedentary practices I developed, that would shape my life until I became more self-aware and conscious about my health. I was also taunted for being fat, and experienced considerable discomfort from being made to feel aberrant, abnormal, and less than. I developed some body issues because of the teasing, and became very self-conscious about my weight and body shape, moving into middle school (grades 6-8). I remember, in the sixth grade, getting punched in the face by an eighth grader who towered over me (he looked, and acted, like he owned the school, having been held back twice). I had apparently obstructed his path in the hallway, and after shoving me aside into the lockers on the wall, exclaimed, "move it, FAT BOY!" With a look of bewilderment on my face, I retorted, "what the fuck?!" after which, he immediately decided that was enough lip from a sixth grader to warrant throwing a fist.

Throughout much of my pre-teen and teenage years, I oscillated on the larger side of the body spectrum. I can remember hating to visit our family doctor because he always carried a recording device through which, he would speak out loud, rather than write down, his assessments of patients right in front of them. My assessments went something like this:

> "The date is November 23rd. Time: 2:45pm. The patient, Ronnie Mower, is 11 years old. Male. Height: 4 feet seven inches tall. Patient is **overweight** for his age and height.

With no knowledge of the measurement protocol (the Body Mass Index) by which I had been assigned the category of "Overweight," I was left to sort out what exactly that meant. It became a label, one of my labels. Apparently, I was overweight, and he felt the need to tell me so each and every time I visited that doctor's office. I internalized that label, along with all the meanings I picked up from pop culture, my peers, or family, that defined for me, what it meant to be "overweight" in the New Right's emergent, individualizing, neoliberal hegemony of the 1980s and 1990s (Jeffords, 1993); an increasingly body-centric conjuncture where health/fitness and bodywork were becoming fused to discourses of "lifestyle" and personal choice (Ingham, 1985; Howell & Ingham, 2001).

Looking back, I interpret this period as part of the long march of the neoliberal revolution (Hall, 2011) which has been, and continues to be, dependent upon the cultural ingratiation of rugged individualism which, as an ideological project, finds tremendous synergistic power within fitness and health discourses that likewise target the individual and seek to instill practices and beliefs about individual responsibility. Or, as Hall suggests, "neoliberalism is grounded in the 'free, possessive individual', with the state cast as tyrannical and oppressive. The welfare state, in particular, is the arch enemy of freedom" (2011, p. 10). In this model, and through its popular mediation in the culture industries (Bourdieu, 1993; Gramsci, 1971), state intervention has been equated to, and symbolized by, excessive, corpulent, soft-bodies that are dependent, lazy, and unproductive (Jeffords, 1993). According to such codes within popular culture then, I was a soft body that required discipline, direction, and constant reminder that I was abnormal and needed to work on my body to hopefully, someday, become a more valued member of society. I felt like a target of intervention at times, and treated in a condescending manner, not unlike what I have witnessed within BMoreFit, and in my young adult years as a personal trainer. Thus, it was

through the vitriolic and venomous attacks on my excessive corporeality that I desperately sought a transformation: a relief from the burdens of my fatness and its socially constructed meanings.

My social life, in-process identity, and sense of self, was impacted by my fatness in very peculiar ways. While a number of other forces played a role (family divisions, for example), I am particularly conscious of the ways in which my larger-than-average body interacted with, and was perceived by others, and served to demarcate my social value and position, within the vastly different racialized contexts of my life. As early as the third grade, I felt more accepted by the African American and Latin American kids I attended school with, and that lived in my neighborhood. The white kids made fun of me for being fat. They harassed me, and a few of them tried to beat me up. I didn't fit within their social circles and they let me know of their disapproval. And while this would only worsen as I appeared to them to have, "switched sides" by choosing to sit with all the black kids in the cafeteria (Tatum, 1997), I became more self-assured, and felt safe and secure in the presence of my more ethnically diverse peers. I was occasionally teased in these social circles as well, but it was never vicious, rather it was in the mode of "playing the dozens" (Kelley, 1997a; Smitherman, 1994) in which, I often became the inevitable target and focus for white jokes (often making fun of the stereotypical uncool dullness, or posh demeanors, of wealthy white men, or highlighting the oppressiveness of "the man" in various contexts). I really didn't mind this though. At least they weren't fat jokes. And despite being forced to see my own whiteness through the manner in which they described it, (which stung sometimes as I realized that my skin color was articulated to histories of oppression, genocide, and possessive greed), I quickly learned not to take the negative comments and jokes about white

people as personal attacks, but rather, the honest perceptions about white privilege and power from the perspective of those most negatively affected by these very structures.

Instead, and on a regular basis, I received very real and blunt lessons about America's history, and the context of contemporary race relations, that I needed to hear and confront. It also provided a new way of viewing the world, and its inequitable social systems and relations that were certainly not being taught in my home or in the public school system. Indeed, without an honest education in America's racial history, the cultivation of diverse vantage points, and exposure to ethnicities and cultures other than their own, most white children are "raised to experience their racially based advantages as fair and normal" (Marty, 1999, p. 51), and subsequently learn to ignore, deny, and even actively refute, their unearned privileges and the continued existence and impact of systemic racism. This, I believe, is at least a partial outcome of post-Civil Rights backlash, wherein the hard racial framing of previous generations (Feagin, 2013) has given way to a new discourse of colorblindness that allows whites to conveniently bury the memory of America's racial past, and avoid discussions about its continued impact in our historical present (Bonilla-Silva, 2002).

Amidst segregated, racially homogenous communities and a socio-political context of racial avoidance, what we are being left with then is new generations of young whites whose (mis)education about race occurs through an entertainment oriented, and profit driven, media system that perpetuates a "fear and fascination" of black culture (Yousman, 2003), Eurocentric educational curricula that marginalizes histories of the oppressed, and a broader culture of neoliberal individualism that views social problems (including racism) as personal troubles (Ingham, 1985). In my own life, I consider myself very fortunate to have had experiences which facilitated what I believe all white people need to learn, and preferably at an early age; how to *see* and confront their own whiteness and the privileges associated with

it (including how such privileges only come at the expense of people of color), to hopefully prevent, challenge, and mitigate the (sub)conscious, often deeply embedded, racialized schemas of thought and action, white privilege, white arrogance, and color-blind racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2002; Rodriguez, 2011). In this sense, my early immersion in the cultural spaces, and practices, of my peers significantly contoured my identity, worldview, and sense of self in a way that made me defiantly challenge what I perceived to be the politics of whiteness (i.e., the embodied habitus of unjust white privilege and power). It was therefore out of these experiences that I began developing white "race traitor" (Twine, 2000) sensibilities, despite having yet to formulate these passions into a meaningful form of praxis.

Nevertheless, in my particular case, the nascent critical race consciousness I had begun developing in my youth was also layered with the, not so progressive, cultural performances and representations of an oft stereotyped form of black masculinity; that which is most frequently depicted in popular media as the *seemingly* natural embodiments of black hypermasculinity, aggression, and violence within contexts of "urban" pathology and postindustrial decay (Kelley, 1997a, 1997b; Maharaj, 1999: Smitherman, 1994). Fact is, in my neighborhood, some of the people I hung out with were very tough, seemingly fearless, and experts at the embodiment of "cool pose" (Majors & Billson, 1992). In particular, I looked up to some of the older boys; young black men who evinced this incredible air of confidence and unflinching toughness that I deeply admired.

One boy that had a particularly strong influence on me was nearly six years older than my friends and I. His name was Jimmy and he was big, tough, and seemed to fear nothing and nobody. He lived directly across the street from me, and he would often play football with us, teach us about girls, teach us how to fight, and as he put it, "how to be a man." I remember playing Tecmo Bowl (Nintendo's earliest iteration of what would be

today's popular Madden Football video games) at his house one day when, out of nowhere, he asked me a very loaded question: "*Yo Ronnie, do you wish you were Black*?" The room fell silent, the game paused, and my three friends (two Black and one Latino) turned to me, their faces curious and waiting, along with Jimmy, to see what my response would be. Looking back, I can see why Jimmy might have asked me this. While more ethnic minorities were moving into the neighborhood throughout the late eighties and early nineties, there were still plenty of white families that had kids my age. I certainly could have stuck to my "race" but instead, found more in common with those outside my "racial" group. Subsequently, my social networks grew out of these relationships, which further immersed me in spaces and contexts where I inevitably absorbed the style, mannerisms, and argot associated with my generation of youthful defiance, hip-hop music, and black culture. Nevertheless, without ever considering how different my life would be if I had also been born with darker skin; how these young men, despite the very visible "cool pose" that masked the painful realities of racism they, and their families, routinely experienced (Majors & Billson, 1992); how white privilege was already, and always, operating in my life unbeknownst to me at the time, I responded, "*Yeah man, I can't lie. I do.*" Immediately, Jimmy erupted with amusement, "*my nigga. That's my lil' white nigga Ronnie, young."* The room lit up with excitement, laughter, and convivial gestures towards me. For Jimmy, and perhaps my friends, it was most likely a playful exercise in turning the tables on race, however briefly, and context specific it might have been (See, for example, Wise, 2011). But at that time, and for me, it signaled belonging; that I mattered; that I could find acceptance and respect for being different; for being an "atypical" white boy. After a while, we went back to Tecmo bowl.

Navigating spaces and mentalities of whiteness, privilege, and religious dogma

With my Mother's remarriage to a university professor at age 9, the cultural, racial, and class boundaries I routinely crossed were further complicated by my unforeseen, and unavoidable, exposure to the social networks and experiences of middle-class whiteness, intellectual prestige, and religious conservatism. As much as I could, I rebelled against these impositions but felt compelled to at least feign compliance for the sake of my mother. With my alcoholic, 10th grade dropout father rarely in the picture, other than the occasional drunken spectacle he made in attempting to exercise his rights to visitation, she was all I had. Things changed though. They always do. But, I wasn't ready for them. As she moved further towards the conservative religious lifestyle of my stepfather in my early teen years, I was faced with the choice of open rebellion or quiet subterfuge. Already well attuned to the performative act through which I routinely navigated the divergent contexts of my mother and father's families, I learned to wear yet another mask. A young child with discernment beyond my years, I thought it better to keep mom happy. *It's the least I can do as her only child. I've seen her go through enough already.* I could see she wanted to leave behind the life of drugs, alcohol, violence, and subsistence existence embodied by my father—escape the reality of rearing a son in an environment that, at just one year old and left unattended, had me sucking on empty beer bottles left strewn about the floor; the imminent threat of crime, violence, or incarceration in a space riddled with illegal drugs, desperation, transient bodies, and little concern for tomorrow. Absconding with me though the help of her parents, she found that escape through Mormonism, the support they offered, and the chance meeting of an older and well-established man in the Mormon faith. There was no turning back for her. She was going to make her own happiness in spaces of safety and security, repentance and faith. She wanted something better for herself, and for me. The material, social, and

ideological spaces of Mormonism would become a part of my lived experience, whether I wanted it or not.

They said I was favored
A son of God
More righteous than others
Worthy of reward
But how can that be?
I'm no better than he,
Or her, or anyone else I see!
They tell me it was written
And so shall it be
Jesus, a white man
will save you and me
…

For me, it almost became something like a game to performatively "code switch" and navigate the divergent contexts of my family and social life. At school, or in the neighborhood, I performed the sense of self that came natural and felt comfortable. I was free to associate with whomever I pleased, and I was unburdened by the rules and regulations that sought to, as I saw it, determine who I should become, who I should socialize with, and how I should live my life. But around my mother's family and stepfamily, I felt compelled to turn down the street vernacular to avoid making them feel "uncomfortable," and to not provoke their ignorant questions about my music, friends, clothing, and interests, which, apparently they saw as being definitively "black" in nature. Inevitably, these assumptions about me also called into question, and provided the impetus for them to assume, and frequently investigate, what I could possibly be up to "with all those black kids." Eventually, the implied, yet unspoken, fears about the direction of my life were met with the staunch expectations of me to attend church, become a Boy Scout, and in general, ingratiate myself into more "appropriate" social networks within this religious context. Faced with compliance or discipline, I eventually chose to feign compliance and *act*

accordingly. Hence, into my youth, I became adept at living and performing two very distinct cultural positionalities that intersected with, and reflected, the divergent environments of which I was a part, both by choice and by force.

Regardless of how Mormons typically iterate their purpose to take the "restored gospel of Jesus Christ" to all peoples across the world, regardless of their subject positions, a brief glance at the leadership (to this day, every president since the early 1800's has been Anglo/white), membership (overwhelming majority white), doctrinal beliefs (for example, scripture supported ideas about how God placed a "curse of black skin" on certain biblical era tribes for their unrighteousness, or that darker-skinned peoples were less faithful/righteous in the "spiritual pre-existence" where, it is said, we all lived prior to our birth into a physical body on earth), and policies (black men were denied full membership as "priesthood holders" until 1978), suggest otherwise. As a youth however, these realities were very well hidden from me. All I knew was what I could see with my own two eyes. As such, and given our location in a diverse suburb of Washington D.C., the particular congregation that I attended with my mother and stepfather in Silver Spring, MD also retained a fairly diverse membership, for Mormons at least; the majority were obviously white, but like the overall racial composition of America, the sea of white faces were sprinkled with some Latin Americans, African Americans, Southeast Asians, and a couple Nigerian families. Feeling reassured by this, albeit small, presence of color, it was enough at the time to facilitate my continued ignorance and compliance. When forced to attend services or youth meetings, I encountered a new set of racialized contexts wherein, I continued to find common ground with young ethnic minorities, but often to the chagrin of older, and staunchly conservative, whites. It was very difficult for me at first, but as always, I

learned how to border cross and code switch to present an acceptable front in various contexts, and around certain people.

Race, love, and religion: Coming to terms with a divided life

An open, and long overdue, letter of apology and confession

Dear Mom,

I'm sorry. I tried so hard, for so long, to do the things I thought would make you happy. More than anything else in my life, I wanted to protect you, see you smile, make you proud of your little boy. There was nothing else in this world that hurt me, or saddened me, deeper than seeing your grief. I vowed never to let you down; never contribute to that pain; never disappoint you. I failed. If you're reading this, I know there are tears in your eyes right now. As I write this, there are tears in my own. I quickly wipe them away; hold them back. There are too many people in this coffee house right now. I have rejected the faith that "saved" you: the faith that rescued us from experiencing a much harder life. Well into my early adulthood however, I continued to wear a mask of compliance. For that, I am sorry. I couldn't reconcile the person I was trying to be for you, the person you were hopeful I would become, with the person that I am. For too many years, I hid myself and played the role I thought was expected of me. Stifling my innermost feelings and personal beliefs, dreams and desires, I maintained appearances within the Mormon church for the sake of you, and my ex-wife, who had also become staunchly conservative and sought to likewise limit and control my life according to your religious beliefs. The resulting tensions and conflict over the course of several years of trying to "compromise" and make it work, eventually became more than I/we could withstand. This was not the life I wanted.

At 18 years old, living on my own, and at one point, fearing for my life (finding myself in a situation of crime, drugs, and violence probably not too unlike what you experienced living briefly with my father many years ago), I decided to give the life you had chosen an honest try. I repented of my "sins" and followed your exhortation to serve a 2-year mission for the church. I worked hard and I did it. But, I was nothing like the other young men I encountered and worked with. The only lasting relationship I have from those two entire years in California is my Boston-bred, Haitian friend (the only face of color amidst 200 other missionaries in our area) who, also choosing to serve for similar reasons as I, has also since rejected the faith. We have taken certain elements of it (prayer, self discipline, helping the less fortunate) and applied it to our own spirituality, but we were aberrations in this system of proselytizing zeal. I will never regret the experiences I had there, the people I met, and the service I was able to provide to the needy. But the evangelical imperatives of the faith often frustrated me. How can this, an American religion that sprang from the fountains of Anglo-Saxon manifest destiny, be the only "true" faith for all of God's children in every corner of the earth? Nevertheless, I did what was expected of me at the time, and upon returning home, I continued to do so. Having managed to successfully refrain from sexual intercourse during my time of service (an act considered in the religion as most heinous in God's sight, save murder), I married the first girl I saw off the plane; a

white, middle class, Mormon I had known as a good friend since I was 15. It all happened so quickly…and now it is all over. I finally feel free to speak what is in my heart, to do what I love, to dream and imagine something different, something better…for me. To be continued…

The Personal (Training) is Political: Embodiment, race, and dividing lines

Upon returning home, I translated various pedagogies of the body, inherent to Mormon's very strict puritanical code of health (the word of wisdom), into my own passion for exercise and physical activity. I had lost a significant amount of weight, dramatically changed my body composition, and felt inspired to help others do the same. From 2002-2008, I worked as a certified personal fitness trainer at various gyms, health clubs, and community centers, as well as freelance fitness training in client's homes. It had become part of my lifestyle as a young adult, and influenced my desire to become a strength and conditioning coach, seeking to enroll in the Kinesiology program at the University of Maryland by way of transfer. I became all too familiar with the lifestyle and code of conduct emanating from the profession (Maguire, 2008), including the frequent practice of judging others according to their body size and shape. Whether explicitly stated in the private "employee only" areas of the gym (training rooms and offices), or subtly implied via gestures, or coded language, the evaluative "gaze" of personal trainers is one aspect of health responsibilization (Foucault, 1977, 1986; Gray, 2009) that can be quite pernicious and regressive.

While I occupied the position of being a fitness "role model" (Maguire, 2008), embodying all the presumed characteristics associated with fit bodies (moral value, hard working, individually responsible, etc.), I was nevertheless very attuned to, and conscious of, the harm done by what Monaghan (2008) calls "sizism," which, as Brown & Rothblum,

(1989) put it, materializes as, "hatred and discrimination against fat people, primarily women, solely because of their body size" (quoted in Monaghan, 2008, p. 101). Further, Monaghan (2008) suggests that "sizism is thus enmeshed with sexism, and other prejudices" (p. 101), including racism, ageism, homophobia, and ableism. I provided services to numerous clients over the years that, according to medical standards, would be classified as overweight, obese, and even morbidly obese, as was the case with a woman I worked with for about a year at the Jewish Community Center (MJCC) in Memphis, TN (while earning my Master's degree). Other personal trainers (both at the MJCC, and the Gold's Gym's in Maryland) sometimes snickered and joked that I seemed to "attract all the fat people," and especially the larger women, who bravely ventured into the unforgiving, and sometimes vile, spaces of modern fitness.

While they all had their assumptions as to why this was (i.e., suggesting occasionally, and with racial undertones, that I must "have a thing for the big girls" or that "they must like strong little white boys"), I never revealed to them, what I did reveal to all of my larger clients; that I too, was once fat. More importantly, that I had dealt with the embarrassment, self-hate, and low self-esteem that often permeates the consciousness of people that are under constant public scrutiny, targeted with hateful speech, and ostracized from social networks and peer groups. It is an oft-overlooked form of discrimination that Smith (1990) describes as one of the last safe and acceptable prejudices. I felt degrees of that pain, and I could certainly identify with their struggles. I feel I must also admit though, and following Maguire's (2008) suggestion that, in the personal training profession, a "trainer's personality adds value, differentiating them from other trainers" (p. 221), that my very personal corporeal transformation was also great for business. I could actually show my clients

before and after photos of myself, which functioned as "aspiring texts" for their own fitness journeys.

In this respect, I can identify with well-intentioned BMoreFit organizers who likewise sought to use their own bodies, and the fitness knowledge they had acquired, to help underprivileged youth find happiness, purpose, and career opportunities in the same manner that had apparently worked for them. However, having also been enculturated within ethnically diverse community contexts, I immediately empathized with BMoreFit students, and found the targeted approach to educating them about their responsibilities vis-a`-vis health and fitness, to be quite problematic. This dissertation thereby exposes such problems, and seeks to contextualize and interpret the everyday machinations of fitness philanthropy within broader systems of neoliberal governance, healthism, and white privilege.

Out of the lived textualities of an examined life (Denzin, 2014), I have sought to biographically contextualize my positionality as the researcher, and how it informs my interpretive process. Considerations of race and ethnicity, class and culture, education and social status, became salient upon finding myself in spaces, and contexts, that resembled previously distinct and partitioned arenas of my own life experience. In particular, the experiences of my formative years equipped me with a nuanced sensibility of hip-hop culture, racial and cultural politics, and urban lifestyles, which, as a core part of my own embodied habitus, has long endeared me to the plight of the urban underclass. Thus, in BMoreFit students, I saw the kind of kids that I had grown up with, and from whom, I gained a sense of Self that challenged people's racialized expectations of me. In BMoreFit students, I saw an opportunity to identify, and connect, with underserved young people in order to tell *their* stories. Conversely, in my early adult years, I also learned how to negotiate spaces of fitness and health privilege. As a former personal trainer, establishing relationships

with BMoreFit organizers was relatively easy, but also felt somewhat artificial since I had previously chosen to leave the profession in pursuit of a critical graduate education. Fluid in my ability to "code switch" and negotiate distinctly polarized race and class environments, and groups of people from those environments, I was nonetheless confronted with the reality of these compartmentalization's becoming conflated by my participation in BMoreFit (see chapter four for detail).

On academia and a life divided: How did I even get here?

Acknowledging the often messy processes of engaging in ethnographic fieldwork, I feel I should also admit that this was not the kind of work I imagined myself doing when I first started graduate school, embarking on a sublimely life altering journey through the physical cultural studies oeuvre (hereafter referred to as PCS). While initially more inclined towards a "Hallian" (McGuigan, 2006) inspired critical deconstruction and reconstruction of discursive forms and representations within popular sporting culture (see, for example, Hall, 1981, 1985, 1996), I found that the growing impetus for 'performative' and 'embodied' interrogations of the physical cultural present (see Giardina & Newman, 2011; Silk & Andrews, 2011) elucidated new possibilities to connect, and draw upon, my own lived experience, sensibilities, and embodied cultural politics to intervene, and engage, in the actual, everyday, lived spaces of physical cultural conflict and contestation. In graduate school for example, I was fortunate that my passion for social justice, and interest in matters of race and racism, were strongly encouraged to take shape within macro discursive analyses of race, gender, sport and cultural politics, following the coattails of my well-published, and indeed, prolific scholar-mentors (see, for example, Andrews, Mower & Silk, 2011; Andrews & Mower, 2012; Mower, Andrews, & Rick, 2014). But these were somewhat detached

structural analyses concerning racism and other forms of inequality within sport. Although I remain passionate about their content, purpose, and academic contribution, I have struggled to see their merit and application beyond the academy.

More specifically, I could not see myself continuing to produce such works as the core foundation of my "program of research", moving towards becoming an independent scholar. Quite simply, as much as I support this kind of work and see critical discursive analyses and theoretical treatises as a vital necessity for the progression of critical, emancipatory, and transformative forms of PCS research (and within the constraints of the corporatized university, I will likely continue to supplement my scholarly profile with such publications), I like so much better the idea of using my fortunate position in academia to try and do something different; to use the platform of the PhD title I am seeking, via this dissertation, as the credibility through which to fight for social justice and equality, not only through pedagogical means, but also performatively in my everyday life. As such, and given the theoretical and methodological possibilities of PCS—anti/trans-disciplinarity, radical contextualism, and political commitments for instance (Giroux, 2006; Slack, 1996)—its formation stands as a critical "unity in difference" (Hall, 1985), which holds tremendous potential to intervene in sites of injustice and inequity in meaningful and transformative ways.

I recall not long ago sitting in a conference room at the University of Maryland listening to another prolific scholar, Grant Farred, talk about his penchant for solitude as a critical intellectual. The opportunity to read, think, and write in isolation is a refined practice, indeed, an art, that I think many people are afraid of, overwhelmed by, or, given our uneven, inequitable, underfunded, and increasingly scientized US educational system, ill-prepared to do in the first place (Andrews, 2008). Nevertheless, I admire such scholars who,

in the midst of their sequestered intellectual labors, produce inimitable works that are needed to inspire the future development of the field, guide new generations of critical scholar-teachers, and hopefully, and if we should be so lucky, have some influence to incite more critical, informed, and engaged citizens in our troubled democracy (Giroux, 2006b, 2009). In particular, I have found Farred's historicized and contextual theorizing on the contemporary state of racial politics and popular (sport) culture to be extremely useful and illuminating for my observations of physical cultural injustice and inequity within Baltimore (see specifically, Farred, 2003, 2007, 2008). Myself however, am not this kind of scholar, and consider my own habitus—what Bourdieu (1984) called the seemingly natural, but actually socially learned preferences, tastes, and values that inform our classed identities—to be rather in conducive to this kind of intellectual labor. In fact, at times I am still shocked and startled by my own presence in academia; that unlike my father's poorly inadequate 10th grade education, I managed to barely graduate from high school, and eventually gained the fortuitous financial opportunity to attend college at age 23, and never left.

In graduate school, I couched my social justice aspirations within the work I was reading about post-industrial urbanism, social geography, neoliberalism, and physical cultural studies (for example, Gottdiener & Budd, 2005; Giroux, 2005, 2006; Harvey, 2000, 2001, 2005; Jameson, 1991; Kelley, 1997a; Klein, 2008; Peck & Tickell, 2002; Rose, 2000; Silk, 2004; Silk & Andrews, 2006; Silk & Amis, 2005). And while I respect these works, and attribute much of my early formation as a scholar to their influence (particularly that of Andrews, Silk, and Amis as my direct mentors at the Universities of Maryland and Memphis), I also wanted to develop my own path of research that involved more participatory and active forms of engagement leading towards meaningful praxis. Inevitably, the idea of performing ethnographic research caught my attention. Berry (2011) suggests

that nobody really aspires to be an ethnographer: in short, to do ethnographic work. In fact, he suggests that, "the inexorable link between lifeworlds and ethnography, between the 'ethnographic life' and ethnographers' selves" results in our "being definitively, yet uniquely and contingently, 'chosen' to live as ethnographers" (p. 165). I am not so much sure that ethnography chose me, as I am that it represented an appropriate and justifiable methodology to enable my immersion *with other people* in an identified socio-cultural context, where I could experience, enquire, and examine (Wolcott, 2008). In this respect however, I am increasingly drawn to the ideas of Paulo Freire in terms of choosing to bring into coherence, all aspects of one's life as a 'critical pedagogue', seeking to continuously put into practice, the processes of "conscientizacao," or conscientization (Freire, 2000).

Thus, desirous to extend my broadly defined social justice interests and macro inquiries into the level of lived experience, I sought out opportunities to develop my dissertation around an empirical site that would allow me to perform a more "hands-on" physical cultural ethnography. Or rather, I wanted to be an "embodied participant," (Giardina & Newman, 2011) involved in something greater than myself, along with others who were likewise engaged in the pursuit of some greater cause. Ever encouraged by my Cultural Studies training, and its impetus to link structure and agency (Hall, 1985, 1996; Williams, 1977), my reading into Baltimore's political economy—combined with the influence of a dialectic historical materialism (Lefebvre, 2009[1968]; Marx, 1977)—inevitably lead me to consider how I might articulate lived experience within these material and ideological structures (racism, neoliberal capitalism, post-industrialism, and post-fordism, for example).

Working with BMoreFit

The spring 2010 semester brought a unique opportunity for me to serve as Dr. David L. Andrews' Teaching Assistant for a pilot course he had developed, entitled *The [In]Active City: The Physical Cultures of Metropolitan Baltimore*. It would prove to be the catalyst in the gradual development of my dissertation topic. Still in its formative stages at the end of 2009 however, Dr. Andrews and I discussed the proposed course, what my role would be, and how I could develop and oversee the ethnographic portion of students' work. We assigned each group of students two very polarized Community Statistical Areas (CSAs) of Baltimore so that they could map the connections between health outcomes and the socio-spatial environment. As I usually did in my meetings with Dr. Andrews, I listened attentively, scribbled notes feverishly, and tried to keep up with the incessant theorizing and conjuring of new and intriguing ideas as we spoke. If I ever felt deflated, uninspired, or confused about the direction of my work, or the PhD program, I could always rely on what I call the "Andrewsian" fountain of brilliance and reassurance. And as I had come to expect, the fountain delivered. Sometime in November of 2009, and no doubt while scouring the internet for discursive materials relevant for use in The [In]Active City course, Dr. Andrews came across an organization called BMoreFit.

As a 501(c)3 non-profit set within the broader contextual landscape of urban Baltimore, it seemed to neatly bring together all the issues that I was both passionate about, and had experience with (namely, social justice, race/ethnicity, class, and fitness/health), all under the umbrella of philanthropic outreach. In the four years that have transpired since my initial contact with BMoreFit, I never could have imagined how much this process would change me. My initial engagement with the people in BMoreFit was as a more detached observer leading up to, and during, the 2010 Summer Training Program in which,

underprivileged youth were taught about fitness and health from fitness industry experts in and around the Baltimore area. During this time, I gained tremendous insights into the nature of the health club space, codes of "right" conduct, and the particular fitness pedagogies that BMoreFit organizers were wont to instill in the minds of their young pupils. Being in my third year of the PhD program at the time, and not yet having gained IRB approval however, I refrained from conducting formal interviews and instead conducted an ethnographic observation pilot study. After gaining IRB approval in November 2010, I prepared to defend my dissertation proposal in the spring of 2011.

Just a couple short months before I was scheduled to defend, the Executive Director of BMoreFit informed me that they would be "postponing" the 2011 Summer Training Program due to "budgetary issues" and the concern that the underprivileged youth in 2009 and 2010 just were not progressing fast enough to justify the continuation of these efforts. I was disheartened by the Board's decision, not only because, in an instant, my plans for further data collection had been scratched off the menu, but also because I saw great potential in the fundamental idea of providing this kind of active education to Baltimore's underserved youth. The Summer Training Program (Monday through Friday, eight hours a day, for six weeks) was going to provide further, and unencumbered, opportunities to closely observe the embodied social relations of two polarized groups (BMoreFit Faculty and the Students recruited into the program) brought together provisionally under the auspices of philanthropic outreach. Without the training program however, there would be fewer opportunities to directly observe student-faculty interactions and interrelationships. Scrambling to find an alternative mode to collect meaningful data and still move forward with my proposed dissertation, I was approached by the Director of BMoreFit and asked to conduct a survey study that would help BMoreFit determine where to focus their efforts and

how to more effectively fight, as the Director put it, the "battle against childhood obesity" and poor health in Baltimore. Not particularly wanting to start from scratch by severing my ties to BMoreFit and the relationships I had already developed during the pilot study, I agreed to help in this way. I rationalized this decision in two ways. First, I imagined that this project could enable me to give something back to the organization that had provided me access (albeit limited, since they were cancelling the part of the program in which I was most interested). Second, I determined that I could use some of the collected data to support other sources (interviews, observations, embodied participation in shared dialogue and fitness activities, and a Photovoice project with former students). In retrospect, I probably accepted way more responsibility than I could feasibly handle at the time, and allowed my work as an "official representative" of BMoreFit to overshadow my work as an observing participant researcher. I spent the greater part of 2011 developing, managing, and conducting a city-wide survey study that produced meager results and eventually led to my altogether fallout with the organization by the end of 2012 (see chapter 4 for detail).

Afraid that I was being co-opted by BMoreFit, and getting pulled too deeply into its organizational politics and purposes, I sought to orchestrate a project solely with BMoreFit students, outside the purview of BMoreFit organizers. Thus, while still carrying out the survey project on behalf of BMoreFit, I reached out to all the former students from 2009 and 2010 to participate in a Photovoice project (a participatory methodology involving participants' use of photography to visually depict their lived experiences). This was important since, in light of the cancellation of the 2011 Summer Training Program, I would only have limited engagement with former BMoreFit students through bi-weekly meetings intended to assist them with networking, finding employment in the fitness industry, and forging partnerships with other non-profits to provide free fitness instruction in local

communities. Crucially, there was no longer a reason for them to show up each and every day of the week to the empirical site. Thus, without this opportunity for prolonged engagement in the pursuit of capturing, and representing with sufficient depth, their personal experiences, I felt that I would be telling a story that lacked their voices.

Away from the regular surveillance of BMoreFit organizers, I tried feverishly to coordinate meetings, encourage participation, and discuss with the former students, how Photovoice could enable them to make their voices heard. Unfortunately, and similar to the survey project, the Photovoice attempt proved futile as it became impossible to contact, schedule, and meet with the former students who had their own lives to live and no immediate reason to continue their affiliations with BMoreFit or myself. I couldn't fault them for it. There's no way I would have wasted my time participating in a research project in my late teen, early adult years either. However, there is another critical aspect of this attempted participatory research collaboration that I failed to realize at the time. In all my desperate attempts to *make* the Photovoice project a successful reality (recruiting undergraduate student assistants, developing written guidelines, coordinating meetings, etc.), I had largely assumed that, since BMoreFit students rarely had the chance to voice their own opinions and perspectives within the parameters of the BMoreFit training program, that they would be anxious to do so through the medium that I was providing them. I had naively assumed that students would want to "vocalize," "express," and speak into existence, their concerns and perspectives. I did not consider at the time, how "silence" can also be a form of protest, survival, or resistance to established power structures and authority, particularly within white dominated spaces and institutions (Castagno, 2008; Rodriguez, 2011).

Research contingencies, personal traumas, and auto/ethnography as healing

At the start of 2012—right around the time I had initially proposed to be in the writing phase of my dissertation, preparatory for me to defend in the Spring 2012 semester—I realized that I had enough meaningful data to continue writing up most of my proposed chapters, but also felt that I was missing the most critical aspect of my dissertation as I originally conceived it; the voices of the students in BMoreFit. Initially, I planned to devote two entire empirical chapters to my work with students; the first focused on representing their experiences within the pedagogical structures and exclusive spaces of BMoreFit (Chapter 3), the second seeking to articulate, through the Photovoice methodology, the everyday lived experience of students in local Baltimore communities (originally planned to be Chapter 4). Uncertain how to reconcile this perceived empirical gap, I continued efforts to contact former students but to no avail (See Chapter 3). Eventually, I had to relinquish my pursuit of the Photovoice project altogether and find an alternative focus to take the place of the fourth and final empirical chapter.

Additionally, some intense personal and financial pressures stemming from an impending divorce, and separation from my two daughters, threatened to permanently derail my research and writing efforts. My dissertation project was going stale and I was, in that moment, at a loss for how to salvage it. Having seen others drop out of the graduate program, and always already doubting, at times, my ability, or rather, my suitability to be a college professor anyway, I was tempted to call it quits and seek employment elsewhere. As I had done repeatedly throughout my life, I began looking for a new hustle. During 2012, I continued to teach classes at Towson University and the University of Maryland under the auspices of completing my dissertation, but the adjunct pay I received was not near the amount I needed to survive. Alimony, child support, and the inflated costs of residency in

the Prince George's County suburbs of Washington D.C. was plunging me deeper into debt. Life was getting stressful. Denied assistance even from my immediate family (upset with me over the divorce), I lived out of my car for a short time, spending the night at various friends' apartments, until I found a sublease, for which my best childhood friend co-signed for me. In this situation of uncertainty, I was enticed by familiar, yet risky ways to make money and found that it was taking me further away from my dissertation, from graduate school, and from the PCS program and my colleagues.

It was around this time of frustration that I found some solace and clarity in the reading of self-reflexive, sensuous, autoethnographies. There was something therapeutic about it. To read about, and relate to, the personal struggles and experiences of other scholars was inspiring. I felt reconnected to a network of critically minded, radically progressive, and socially conscious scholars and activists, using their own life experiences to intervene in the broader social contexts of injustice and inequity (Boylorn, 2011; Denzin, 2014; Giardina & Newman, 2011; Giroux, 2012; Nabhan-Warren, 2011; Newman, 2011; Toyosaki, Pensoneau-Conway, Wendt, & Leathers; Wise, 2011). In years prior, I was fascinated by such forms of writing, if for no other reason than the accessibly fluid nature of deeply personal storytelling.

In particular, I remember being awestruck the first time I read, my friend and colleague, Dr. Josh Newman's profoundly self-reflexive narrative, entitled, *[Un]Comfortable in my own skin: Articulation, reflexivity, and the duality of self* (Newman, 2011). Prior to its publication, I first read this piece on Dr. Newman's blog space as part of the Paulo Freire website at www.freireproject.org. It spoke to me in such a way that I began to see the possibility of engaging reflexively with my own history by writing into, and thereby locating, the contested and conscious Self, within the broader contexts of my everyday life and

academic pursuits. Although reared in vastly different racial and cultural environments, we had both been working class kids, poorly educated, and delinquent, yet somehow, we each managed to find an opportunity (both materially and intellectually) through the eventual and fortuitous path of a critical graduate education in PCS. Further yet, I felt a kinship borne out of our common purpose to expose, critique, and challenge forms of racial, class, and gender oppression by exploiting our socially constructed, and privileged, whiteness to gain access to spaces (ideological and material) that reproduce the status quo (i.e., Josh revisiting the sporting cultures of the south via Nascar and Ole Miss football, and myself immersed in the overtly white and privileged, middle to upper class spaces of fitness philanthropy in Baltimore, MD). Nevertheless, the internal conflict I experienced whilst trying to simultaneously navigate my relationships with both, wealthy white entrepreneurs and fitness professionals on one hand, and underprivileged black youth (the targets of intervention) on the other, drove me to determine that autoethnography would become a significant component of this dissertation. As I explain in detail in chapter 4, it was the experience of "betweenness" (England, 1994) that I needed to reconcile and make sense of, both in my personal life, and in the research I was conducting with disparate groups (BMoreFit faculty and students), and in divided spaces (the health club and various Baltimore communities marked by intense social cleavages).

To be honest, I had long been afraid to write myself into a text in such a way that I exposed the disjointed contexts of my life, the contradictions of my lived experience, and in general, things that I was taught to hide, ignore, or keep 'sacred.' However, the more I read these exquisitely articulate, personal and poetic narratives, the more I gained confidence in my own ability to use the uniqueness of my life experiences as a point of departure. In essence, it felt like I was gradually leaving behind the ideological shackles of authority and

"truth" (academic and/or religious), and moving towards a deeper appreciation for contingency, context, and dialogic openness. This critical ontological shift and subsequent growth as an independent scholar, was also intimately connected to my long overdue exodus from the Mormon faith, which, for a significant portion of my life, had sought to repress the underdeveloped, and somewhat naïve, social consciousness I had developed from being raised in close proximity to black working class cultures in and around Washington, D.C. Thus, the dual consciousness I developed in my youth—learning to performatively pander to the religious dogmas, and "friendly face" of neoliberal, regressive cultural politics, of my mother and stepfather to avoid ~~their~~, her, disapproval, while simultaneously absorbing the black cultural styles, politics, and consciousness of my peers in our neighborhood—provides context for understanding how I negotiated the starkly divergent experiences, perspectives, and worldviews of both BMoreFit faculty and students.

Positional liminalities: Somewhere between the urban working class and the professoriate

Near the end of 2012, I reached a pivotal moment in my life. I knew that I needed a more legitimate way to earn a living, and going back to manual labor was not it. Even with Bachelors and Masters degrees from prestigious universities, I struggled to find full time employment. Somewhere between going through a divorce, being ostracized by family and former friends, having my dissertation project grind to a halt, and being overwhelmed with financial crisis, I considered giving up my pursuit of the PhD. I began working with two close friends in a business venture that markets insurance products; a far cry from the critical intellectual work I had been pursuing for several years. I began to invest my time and energy into this pursuit and saw the potential to make good money while helping people prepare for their futures. However, this would last only a few short months until my friend, and

business partner (also my BMoreFit survey research partner, see chapter four) was incarcerated for some minor felony offenses that nonetheless, due to his lack of US citizenship, threatened to have him deported to Jamaica. All the momentum we had been building around our business venture came to an abrupt end and I was quickly going broke. Even more jarring than this however, was the fact that my friend was now facing permanent deportation with no opportunity for return, and ultimately a forced separation from his wife and three children who had their entire lives rooted in the Washington D.C. area. I attended the trial proceedings with his family and wrote a letter to the judge on his behalf. My girlfriend and I prayed for him and the family regularly. We exchanged letters during a period of about four months in which he remained in custody, until fortunately, in the final hearing of his case, the judge ruled in favor of reduced sentences that would not require deportation. It was a moment of joy and relief in which, we celebrated his freedom and reunion with family. Just as he found new life, a second chance, and the opportunity to again pursue his dreams and ambitions, I would also, just a few days later, come across an academic job opportunity that would allow me to complete my PhD, and most importantly, continue to leverage this privileged academic position to intervene in sites of injustice.

Let me also clarify with respect to this particular job, that it literally *felt* like it was dropped in my lap; not in the sense that I did not have to work for, and earn it, because I did, but in the sense that I was not aggressively seeking work within academia any longer at that point. I had already convinced myself I would need to do something else, and that I would have to be okay with that. It wasn't like I dreamt of being a college professor anyway. Friends that knew me in grade school are literally shocked, and in complete disbelief, at the idea that I—a rabble rousing delinquent that barely went to class, and managed to squeak out a diploma through the "work-release" program, and a few "dummy" classes in my senior

year—could even get into college, let alone earn a PhD! It's not like I hadn't spent most of my youth, and young adult life, working a bevy of manual labor jobs, from residential and commercial construction to package handling (UPS), digging ditches for phone/cable wiring to delivering newspapers, and finally utilizing my physical body and interest in weight lifting, to become a personal trainer. The only reason I even had the chance to attend college was because my mother got remarried to a devout Mormon, who also happened to be a solidly middle class university Professor of economics, who could provide tuition remission at the University of Maryland. I never aspired to do something like teach at a university, and I hated economics. Yet, he provided a crucial opportunity, and I took it. Likewise, in this tumultuous period of uncertainty, of which, I was preparing to accept contingencies and seek an alternate career path, I applied for the opportunity to teach a split appointment in sport management and sport studies at The College at Brockport in New York.

In the fall of 2013, I gratefully accepted a position in the Department of Kinesiology, Sport Studies, and Physical Education (KSSPE) at The College at Brockport, State Universities of New York. It has been both a challenging, and highly rewarding, experience as I have sought to bring new critical perspectives into the curriculum of sport studies and sport management. Immediately, I was tasked with elevating the graduate program's rigor with regard to qualitative research methodologies by teaching two graduate level methods courses in my first semester. I have now been slated to teach these courses on an ongoing basis. With the graduate program's emphasis on practical training in physical education pedagogy and athletic administration, students have, in the past, received virtually no grounding in sociological concepts, critical (physical) cultural studies, or ethnographic methods. And it is in this realm of exposing students to critical theories and challenging their assumptions about the socially constructed nature of embodiment and experience that I

have begun to find my pedagogical niche. I am now actively engaged in coordinating collaborative qualitative research projects between both graduate and undergraduate students on topics related to college students' perceptions of physical cultural difference and embodiment (race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, class, age, ability, religion). I also recently relocated to the college community to accept a position as a Faculty in Residence (FIR) wherein, by living on campus, I have even more opportunities to engage with young people by acting as a faculty mentor and role model. In particular, this has proven to be a uniquely rewarding experience in which, I can sense the gradual process of bringing the entirety of my life, politics, hopes and ambitions, into a coherent and meaningful whole. I am seeing more and more how my presence in academia, despite the occasional uncertainties and lingering moments of self-deprecation, is not just good for me professionally or financially, but serves a broader social function to critically educate the young minds I am charged with, not only in the classroom, but outside it as well; to link theory and practice, pedagogy and lived experience. And it is here that I am being increasingly pulled into considerations of identity politics, critical pedagogy, and critical self/reflexive methodologies for the development of a program of research that places social transformation and justice at the center.

In this role as an educator/community member, I am finding new ways to utilize my privileged subjectivity as a white heterosexual male to disrupt the taken for granted assumptions, and ideological belief systems, that often permeate racially homogenous spaces of higher education, and the local communities that surround them. It is an aspect of my own white privilege that I do not hesitate to acknowledge, in order to highlight racial inequities and operations of power. For example, I can feel safe and confident in front of a classroom of 75 students (as I was last semester), of whom only 8 are students of color, and ardently discuss the ongoing realities of structural racism, white privilege, and forms of

discrimination against people of color without being challenged, or disregarded by my white students as to the credibility of my education, or the concepts I am discussing with them (see, for example, white student backlash against minority teachers in Rodriguez, 2009). And while I reflexively wrestle with the material realities of this privilege, I am also seeing the ways in which my normative subject position can be strategically used to open up a dialogic space of possibility for the students here to imagine something different. I am a white heterosexual male college professor embodying a habitus and cultural logic of resistance, justice, and equality on behalf of those marginalized and oppressed by the forces of neoliberal capitalism, white power and privilege, misogyny, and homophobia. As part of my performative pedagogical praxis, I purposely choose not to consign myself to using the professional, authoritative, and decidedly white middle class, vernacular of higher education when I teach (i.e., those aspects of power and control through language and embodiment that communicates the traditional Teacher-student relationship). Instead, I speak with my students in the classroom as I would publically speak with my friends back home; they hear my accent and the mode of speaking that reflects my regionalized, cultured, and classed socialization in the ethnically diverse communities in and around Washington, D.C. I also dress in a manner that is both comfortable to me, and which inevitably reflects my lifelong affinity for the cultural styles and politics of a diverse and globalizing hip-hop culture (Kitwana, 2005b). Passionately and unapologetically, I advocate for an awareness of social justice and the unjust operation of power, and seek to help students' articulate theoretical concepts to an examination of their own lives and positions within society.

In this capacity, I am advancing a critical pedagogy that allows my own embodiment to be read as a disruptive text within, and outside, the classroom in the hopes that, all my students, but particularly those who have been privileged by existing power arrangements,

will learn that it is okay, and indeed necessary, to admit and challenge one's own unearned racial, class, and gender privilege. In particular, to understand that social problems like racism are in fact, problems with white people, the social constructions of whiteness, and the false manner in which fairer skin persons have been taught to see themselves, as sovereign individuals in an otherwise fair and equal social system (Feagin, 2013; Lipsitz, 2006; Twine, 2000; Ware, 2002a, 2002b; Wingfield & Feagin, 2012; Wise, 2011). Lastly, I want students to feel moved towards advocating for social justice, thinking relationally, and envisioning collective and inclusive social movements amidst a tide of neoliberal individualism. Such movements, and the development of critical thinking that can lead towards action, is not only desperately needed in our current anti-historical conjuncture, but represents the possibility for a more humane, equitable, and just society (Denzin, 2014). On this note, I have discovered a need within this community that I am addressing through active forms of consciousness raising performative pedagogy; my purpose to provide the conceptual tools, and an embodied example of how to reflexively consider one's social location and the structures within which it is produced, and which it helps to produce, to critically decipher the falsities of late capitalism and the social inequities it creates and maintains (Harvey, 2005; Jameson, 1991; Zizek, 2009). In this sense, I am both personally and professionally invested in this community and have found renewed purpose in the unique role I am able to play here.

Looking back however, I never could have imagined how much the journey towards a PhD would change my life. This rendering of my research encounters, longitudinally spanning the events and moments of several formative years of my academic, and young adult, life, offers but a glimpse into the broader patterns of social division in cities like Baltimore. For the most part, and aside from contextualizing the empirical site and

critiquing discourses of health responsibility, I have chosen to write this account of my ethnographic experiences in a very personal and reflexive manner, inviting the reader to seriously consider issues of identity, context, and the role of the researcher within new and emergent forms of qualitative inquiry (Coffey, 1999; Denzin, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Having encountered difficulties collecting data for my final empirical chapter, which was to be focused on BMoreFit students' lives outside the program, I decided instead to turn the microscope of qualitative inquiry upon myself, and write reflexively about my experiences with BMoreFit, including the work I carried out on their behalf as an official representative (See, Chapter four).

In writing auto/ethnographically, I have also attempted, perhaps unsatisfactorily at times for some readers, to locate myself and my life story as a critical element of contextualizing shared dialogic engagements in the field, and a meaningful part of the interpretive process as a whole. Meaningful because, *in the midst of working with, and ethnographically representing, the experiences of two distinct and highly polarized groups of people, I was often caught within the liminal spaces of contested embodiment, wherein I was both an insider and outsider; a chronic border crosser, a rogue agent lacking concrete definition*. It is this manner of positional crisis, fittingly enough, that also forms the hallmark of my entire life experience, being raised within spaces and contexts of extreme contradiction and disjuncture. And while the conditions of my own life may be somewhat unique, the experience of positional uncertainty and conflict is something I think many people can identify with regardless of the actual formation it may take.

As such, I felt it necessary to incorporate and seek to connect reflections of my life experience with my more recent fieldwork encounters, acknowledging that "once your own body (i.e., the body of the researcher) and its body politics are set in motion, you become

intimately articulated and necessarily contingent to that which you study, as well as all of the complications, contradictions, messiness, and struggles that come with it" (Giardina & Newman, 2011, p. 8). Considerations of what to study, how to study it, and for what ultimate purposes, can all be linked to the active construction of lived textualities (Denzin, 2014) and embodied performances (Giardina & Newman, 2011). For it is out of these concerns, trials, and struggles, the forms of labor I undertook, and the relationships that were forged, that I have produced this account of my ethnographic experiences and my journey towards the PhD. It is thus my hope that those who read this dissertation, even a portion of it, might recognize something within its pages that incites transformative personal and/or collective change, challenges preconceived notions and "common sense" thinking, and promotes a communitarian logic of anti-racism, social and communal responsibility, justice, and equality (Denzin, 2014).

INTRODUCTION: *Fitness Philanthropy & Physical Cultural Fissures*

> The BMoreFit Program is completely unique in that it will fill an unmet, urgent need by matching an underserved community of young, predominantly African American adults with a program made up of dedicated faculty, mentors and volunteers, state-of-the-art facilities, professional training materials, individual and group fitness and nutrition coaching, and a variety of externship and job placement opportunities. BMoreFit will motivate and guide this pilot group of students to improve their own fitness and to obtain the education and skills necessary to become certified fitness professionals. They will ultimately give back to their communities through their newly obtained professional knowledge and experiences (Official Program Description, 2009)

Fitness philanthropy, failed states, and physical cultural fissures: The problem of addressing "urban" youth in Baltimore is the product of nearly three years of ethnographic fieldwork with a non-profit fitness and health program in Baltimore City. It tells a story that is microcosmic of contemporary Baltimore, echoing the positions and experiences of highly segregated groups of people with regard to fitness, health, and the body. Importantly, this project questions the interconnections of physical culture, "fitness philanthropy," and the contested terrains of lived experience; the kind of experience that reflects one's position in a social hierarchy that bestows (physical cultural) privilege and advantage upon some, while coming at the expense of disadvantaging others. Thus, of primary interest is the manner in which such disparities are discursively constituted and represented, experienced in everyday life, and responded to by elites who possess the time and resources to generate and enact structured interventions on behalf of the less fortunate. More specifically, *this dissertation critically interrogates, through ethnographic and auto/ethnographic methods, the various modalities through which BMoreFit, here defined as a microcosmic example of Baltimore's emergent voluntary health and fitness sector, sought to reform the health, behavior, and lifestyle of underserved, black youth. It is argued that, given the relative position of privilege from which, much voluntary sector provision is imagined and enacted, the*

attempt to "teach" or "train" underprivileged groups about "appropriate" lifestyle behaviors, is problematic, and requires further investigation through critical and reflexive methodologies. Thus, it was my intention to examine the BMoreFit organization as they sought to educate, discipline, and mold select groups of young people, using a curriculum that formally espoused cutting edge fitness/health knowledge from industry experts, and informally advocated an individually focused, approach to all fitness/health crises. The divergent identifications, experiences, and subject positions of BMoreFit instructors (hereafter referred to as BMoreFit Faculty, to use the name given by the organization) and BMoreFit Students became a key point of focus considering that research suggests the need for "effective and culturally appropriate interventions for racial and ethnic minority populations" (Thomas, Quinn, Butler, Fryer, & Garza, 2011, p. 494). This dissertation investigates the *limits* of 'fitness philanthropy' as it is popularly conceived, and enacted, within the highly segregated, deindustrializing, and rapidly gentrifying spaces of Baltimore.

The basic ecology of the US urban metropolis is traditionally marked by intense social cleavages that manifest along highly correlated axes of wealth, health, and race/ethnicity (Gottdiener & Budd, 2005). Unsurprisingly, the contemporary American city continues to stand starkly divided in a post-civil rights, and supposedly, "post-racial" historical moment. In a recent article by David Simon (2013), creator of the hit series 'The Wire' (a gritty drama depicting life in Baltimore), he provides a cogent, Marxian-inspired reflection on the abuses and inconsistencies of free-market capitalism, including the ever-expanding chasm between rich and poor:

> America is a country that is now utterly divided when it comes to its society, its economy, its politics. There are definitely two Americas. I live in one, on one block in Baltimore that is part of the viable America, the America that is connected to its own economy, where there is a plausible future for the people born into it. About 20 blocks away is another America entirely. It's astonishing how little we have to do with each other, and yet we are living in

> such proximity… We've somehow managed to march on to two separate futures and I think you're seeing this more and more in the west.

Such disparities manifest themselves in the material realities of employment, housing, transportation, and education, to the increasingly personalized issues of health, food and nutrition, recreation and physical activity, and overall quality of life. Statistically speaking, measures of health outcomes are highly correlated with factors influenced by one's socioeconomic position, and where one lives and works. For example, Marmot (2004) suggests that there is a highly correlative "health gradient" in which, health outcomes are directly tied to the material lived realities of different social groups being exposed to different social and economic conditions. In other words, exposure to the conditions of poverty and subsistence existence is highly associated with an increased risk of disease, mortality, drug addiction, crime, and violence, to name but a few.

Conversely, the higher up the social gradient one climbs the lower the incidence and risk of such outcomes becomes. For example, living in a wealthier neighborhood with less crime, a cleaner built environment, with better schools, and more job opportunities. Given these socioeconomic realities, it is vital to also acknowledge how de-facto segregation and racial discrimination have been perpetuated by politico-economic arrangements that have long disadvantaged black America from receiving the same opportunities in housing, employment, healthcare, and education, in particular (Wacquant, 1994, 2007; Wacquant & Wilson, 1989). Health statistics in urban areas also reveal significant racial disparities as a result of these disadvantages, with ethnic minorities fairing fare worse in health outcomes than their white counterparts (Marmot, 2004; Thomas, et al, 2011; Wacquant, 2007, 2009). Within the context of American cities, the painful histories of racial oppression and inequality, combined with the systematic and continuous re-tooling of the structures of white

supremacy, power, and privilege, are manifest in the contemporary landscapes of socio-spatial division (Wacquant, 2007, 2009).

Amidst such racial and class polarizations, the shifting politico-economic priorities of city governments and the ever-looming presence of 'fiscal crisis' has intensified the plight of the urban underclass and widened the chasm between rich and poor, "white," and "black" communities (Omi & Winant, 1994; Wacquant, 2007). As just one of the countless negative outcomes attending those disadvantaged, and dispossessed, by the rapacious imperatives of free market fundamentalism, gentrification and urban restructuring, the poorest communities in Baltimore also register the highest mortality rates, incidences of disease, and prevalence of heart disease, stroke, and diabetes; conditions closely linked to physical inactivity and obesity (Baltimore City Health Department, 2008; Williams & Collins, 2001). Such outcomes are far too common for populations that have been overlooked and neglected; forced to survive and make do in an unforgiving environment that has been disinvested and left behind, even as the gentrifying downtown areas of the city receive a cosmetic, commercial makeover to hide its intense social cleavages (see, Harvey, 2001 for example). In this context, it is important to consider why the health of underserved populations has become a targeted focus of individual philanthropists, charities, and non-profit organizations.

If anything, history tells us that when powerful white folks immerse themselves in efforts to *help* racial and/or ethnic minorities, indigenous populations, or others marginalized by the US power structure, there is often a specific social purpose. A purpose that, even if bestowing benefits upon some of the targeted population, will ultimately have the greatest benefit for those already in positions of power and privilege. One can see the materialization of this in many sport-oriented programs for inner-city youth for example. In most cases, the impetus and indeed, social purpose of such initiatives is to prevent crime,

delinquency, and dissuade anti-social behavior amongst young black men in particular; those who are *perceived* to be the greatest threat to law and order, civility, and the safety and security of middle class whites (Cole, 1996; Hartmann, 2001; Pitter & Andrews, 1997). But while health is partially implicated in concerns over crime, gangs, and drugs in the city, what are the underlying motivations propelling this heightened concern over the health and fitness of previously neglected communities? Why would privileged philanthropists want to invest time and money in attempts to improve the health of Baltimore's underprivileged? How effective are such efforts? How do members of the target population receive these initiatives?

Fitness philanthropy, failed states, and physical cultural fissures pulls back the curtain on the emergent phenomena of 'fitness philanthropy', and seeks to open critical dialogue regarding the links between racial and class politics, the experience of (under)privilege, and structures of white power and privilege that continue to shape everyday life in Baltimore, MD. It does so by way of direct and prolonged ethnographic engagement with a single philanthropic organization in Baltimore; one that is widely considered to be a unique form of intervention in urban health issues, but as I will argue, is also representative of philanthropic enterprises which are becoming more commonplace and naturalized within Baltimore's political economy of fitness and health. In doing so, I have been careful not to dichotomize or essentialize the positionalities of the "black" and "white" participants involved in this study, their lived experiences, politics, or cultural habitus. Nevertheless, and as will be shown, the severely polarized socio-spatial environments from which participants hail directly impacts lived experience, leading towards the non-determined and non-guaranteed, but nonetheless prevalent outcomes of social disparities (health, wealth, and quality of life).

Subsequently, how one thinks about their place in society (including one's position on the role of health, fitness, and the individual), is inevitably influenced by the relative barriers or opportunities that impact the experience of privilege and underprivilege. In the process of writing about my experiences with BMoreFit, it seemed unavoidable to nonetheless use these regressive, polarizing, and simplistic categorical labels (i.e., "black" and "white"), in a manner that would continuously reflect the broader systems of oppression that they represent and perpetuate. Indeed, if I had my druthers, the very classifications of race—pure social fictions that for centuries have done nothing but create hierarchies of power benefitting lighter skin people while justifying atrocities against darker skin peoples—would be abolished entirely. Nonetheless, the realities of these material and ideological structures continue to have an incredibly powerful influence upon how we treat each other, where power lies, what is defined as and considered beautiful, who is marked as dangerous, and in general, prevents us as a society from progressing to the point of being even remotely 'meritocratic'. As such, it is the interconnected and interdependent systems of unfair advantage that I inevitably critique throughout this dissertation (neoliberalism, racism, and white privilege, specifically). In particular, this critique takes place within the realm of fitness and health to better understand how different groups of people think about, conceptualize, and act upon, the knowledge and experience they have pertaining to the body and its maintenance. Further, the philanthropic component of this study added yet another significant layer of complexity in as much as the dominant messages about heath and fitness came from individuals occupying a position of privilege in the social hierarchy, and were disseminated to an underserved and vulnerable group of young people, some of which were labeled "at-risk" by various Baltimore City agencies.

At its core, this project is ethnographic in nature, gleaning the majority of interpretive data from direct observation and participation, interviews and focus groups, and an attempted effort with the visual, participatory methodology of Photovoice. It does not claim a definitive truth or attempt to imply a finality of interpretive completeness that can be generalized towards similar organizations, cities, or groups of people. Rather, it provides a rich and focused account of the everyday ebb and flow occurring within, and around, the philanthropic activities of BMoreFit from December 2009 to November 2012, which provided a unique and truly microcosmic glimpse into the broader patterns of social division in Baltimore. *Herein lies the true value of this work; its ability to uncover and negotiate with the ideas, beliefs, perspectives, attitudes, and indeed, physical cultures of two distinct, racially segregated, economically and culturally polarized, groups of people that were nonetheless brought together provisionally under the auspices of charitable outreach and the spectacle of philanthropy*.

Empirical Chapters Breakdown

This project was rooted in the theoretical and methodological currents, and axiological commitments, of a dynamically evolving, radically contextual, and conjuncturally specific PCS (Andrews, 2002; Andrews & Giardina, 2008). Each empirical chapter represents an arbitrary, yet nonetheless necessary, categorizing of empirical focus. In other words, with time spent in the Baltimore Athletic Center (a pseudonym, hereafter referred to as the BAC), where BMoreFit carried out their philanthropic efforts with underprivileged youth, I determined that the best way to (re)construct a meaningful, interpretive narrative of my dialogic research engagements was to partition my focus according to the contextual structures of philanthropy, and the lived experiences of those involved. Thus, I purposefully move the reader from considerations of macro level social structure and process—

discursively contextualizing Baltimore's political economy and the role of health responsibilization and voluntarism within groups like BMoreFit—towards the ethnographic interpretations of BMoreFit faculty and students as two distinctively polarized social groups, and conclude by way of an auto/ethnographic, and critically self-reflexive, account of dialogic and embodied research encounters.

While each chapter seeks to critically interrogate the potential and actual outcomes and impacts of neoliberalism, healthism, racism, and white power and privilege within the emergent spaces and contexts of "fitness philanthropy," it does so by focusing on both the structure within which such charitable efforts occur, and the actual lived experiences and reflections of those, quite distinctive, groups and individuals involved. Thus, the thematic focus of each chapter follows a macro to micro progression of ethnographic data collection, and the emergence of notable themes, informed by my embodied participation with others in BMoreFit activities. In order to set the scene, and conditions, from which an interpretive analysis of BMoreFit participants was enacted and performed, *chapter one provides a broad socio-historic mapping, and conjunctural, context specific reading, of Baltimore's fitness and health voluntarism.* In particular, this chapter addresses the prevalence of dominant ideas about fitness and health that are widely disseminated as "truth" by medical and health/fitness authorities, and as a result, become unquestioned and normalized. By way of critical discourse analysis, chapter one deconstructs several examples of the *healthism* ideology (i.e., that health is solely an individual concern, see Chapter One), its inherent and dialectic connection to neoliberal policies and programming, and the manner in which such powerful and widely communicated ideas of *responsibilization* serve to justify our continued existence in an individualizing neoliberal moment (Hall, 2012; Lowenheim, 2007; Roy, 2008). It is within the contested spaces and contexts of fitness, health, and the body in particular, that

neoliberal ideas have perhaps found their most ardent, culturally resonant, and uncritical commonsensical support. The very language of neoliberal healthism for example, hinges upon the individual responsibility mantra that ever so neatly, and seductively, ingratiates the idea that *health*, wealth, and quality of life have only to do with the individual's capacity to put in the required effort to achieve, for instance, a leaner, more fit and socially acceptable, body.

Following a critical interrogation of such ideas at the macro discursive level in chapter one, chapters two and three are focused at the level of lived experience in terms of how two very distinct groups (BMoreFit faculty and students) negotiated their presence in the BAC and (re)produced, challenged, and adapted widely promoted, and culturally engrained, neoliberal beliefs about the body and fitness. As my fieldwork encounters revealed a microcosmic glimpse into the broader, and quite palpable, social divisions in Baltimore, chapters two and three symbolically represent this chasm by organizing key findings, and attempting to represent, the perspectives of each group independently, and in relation to each other. Thus, *chapter two describes the empirical site (BAC) in detail, and offers an interpretive sketch of (white) privilege, philanthropic intent, and the embodied performances of neoliberal healthism, through BMoreFit organizers and supporters.* More specifically, and within exclusive spaces like the BAC health club, this chapter critically interrogates the manifestation of privileged embodiment, middle class fitness and health-related lifestyle practices, and commonly held values and beliefs. The manner in which BMoreFit Faculty, Board of Directors, and the Director himself, enacted a performative pedagogy of fitness, talked about their role as fitness philanthropists, viewed and spoke about BMoreFit students, and in general, expressed their beliefs concerning health and fitness in America was quite telling. What is revealed through observation, interviews, and countless informal conversations, and

what I attempt to interpretively reconstruct in narrative form, is that there resides a problematic disconnect between the stated goals and intentions of organizations like BMoreFit, and the manner in which they strategically coordinate, organize, and execute programming that specifically targets disadvantaged and underserved groups.

Having circumscribed the broad politico-economic context from which BMoreFit emerges, the dominant discourses informing health and fitness interventions, and providing a critical reading of fitness philanthropists' embodied performative politics, chapter three focuses on BMoreFit students themselves. In particular, and despite institutional and personal barriers that limited the time I was able to spend with students outside the purview of BMoreFit representatives (see chapter four), *chapter three narrates the perceptions and experiences of students as they negotiated an exclusive, affluent, and routinely policed social space of privilege within the BAC.* Mainly through participant observation (working out with students or attending training sessions for example), and informal conversations, this chapter also reveals some of the ways in which students empowered themselves, largely by enacting subversive, and often subtly disguised, forms of resistance within a space and program that tended to neglect their particular concerns, in favor of uniformly applying the established curriculum of fitness training. In response to what I considered to be a missed opportunity to connect students' concerns and lived experiences with the stated goals of BMoreFit's wider philanthropic intent (efforts that included training students so that they too could advocate for healthy change in their own communities), I attempted a Photovoice project with students (i.e., using photography to communicate lived experience and represent the voices of marginalized groups; see, for example, Wang & Burris, 1997; Wang, Cash, & Powers, 2000). Although the project did not progress as desired, it did provide some further opportunities

to connect with students and gain a sense of their experiences and viewpoints, which are likewise reconstructed in narrative form.

In the process of spending time with both BMoreFit faculty and students, becoming recognized as an "official" representative of BMoreFit, and carrying out an ancillary research project on their behalf, I was confronted with a number of internal conflicts and concerns that, after much contemplation, I determined to represent by way of auto/ethnographic and critical self reflexive writing practices (Richardson, 2000). More specifically, the fact that I could identify with both BMoreFit faculty (sharing the common experience of unearned racial privilege, educational opportunities, and fitness/health knowledge and employment) and students (sharing a working class habitus and familiarity with "urban" life, lived experience in black communal and social spaces, and performative knowledge of hip hop culture, style, and argot), presented a number of situations wherein, I began to see the ways in which my own embodiment was "implicated in and cocreating the spaces of physical culture" that I was writing about (Giardina & Newman, 2011, p. 8). Through self-reflexive narrative, *chapter four unpacks moments of (internal) conflict and (dis)comfort during embodied fieldwork, the co-construction of knowledge, and the articulation of personal biography and interpretive processes over the course of my entire engagement with BMoreFit.*

Towards an interpretive theory of embodied pedagogical textualities

In order to outline the theoretical and paradigmatic positions from which I approached this ethnographic engagement with BMoreFit, it should be noted that the specific context of my empirical focus initially led me to engage more familiar literatures dealing with the interrelated forces and processes of *urban neoliberalization*, *deindustrialization* and *post-fordism*, from a decidedly Marxist cultural studies perspective. While there was no

singular theory through which I interpreted the significance of BMoreFit and the social relations occurring within it, a number of contingently based, and radically contextual, theoretical frameworks did inform my interpretations (Grossberg, 1992, 1997a). Following the bricoleur concept (Kincheloe, 2001), I sought after literatures that would help explain what I was seeing, hearing, feeling, and experiencing, and found that what made sense were theories of a critical, deconstructive, and transformative orientation. It is no coincidence that such frameworks are apposite to PCS imperatives and reflective of my own proclivity to place concerns of social justice at the center of my axiological commitments (Frow & Morris, 2000). More specifically, the underpinnings of British Cultural Studies contributed immensely to my interpretive position concerning the embodied relations of power occurring within, and in coordination with, the BMoreFit organization.

A Cultural Studies approach to embodied auto/ethnography

As will be discussed, the nature of the empirical site and the activities that occurred within it made the body a central feature of analysis. More specifically, through various modalities of fitness instruction and practice, I was able to observe bodies in motion, performing movements with purpose, and in a manner that often reflected individuals' familiarity, or lack thereof, with the dominant codes of exercise culture. Further, and in as much as the body represents a text, or site of meaning, the lived experiences, physical cultural practices, and cultural politics of participants' often emerged, and were made visible, through the manner in which they used their bodies, talked about their bodies, and negotiated their presence amidst other bodies. Certainly apposite to a doctoral dissertation in Physical Cultural Studies, it is not surprising that the critical intellectual field of *cultural studies* significantly contoured my interpretive method, epistemology, and theoretical

frameworks. It is necessary then to consider the theoretical underpinnings of British Cultural Studies, the emergence of Physical Cultural Studies, and how the theory/methods of articulation and radical contextualism influenced my embodied ethnographic experiences and interpretations of everyday lived experience, embodied social interaction, and relations of power.

Miller (2001) notes that cultural studies may borrow diverse modes of analysis but does so with, "a particular focus on gender, race, class, and sexuality in everyday life, commingling textual and social theory under the sign of a commitment to progressive social change" (p. 1). In this sense, cultural studies is a politically interventionist practice because it views culture as, "the site of the production and struggle over power, where power is understood not necessarily in the form of domination, but always as an unequal relation of forces, in the interests of particular fractions of the population" (Grossberg, 1997, p. 248). In continually engaging the fluctuating relations of power, cultural studies is concerned with, "the margins of power rather than reproducing established lines of force and authority" (Miller, 2001, p. 1). Always an intellectual response to the existential conditions of everyday life, cultural studies is contextually contingent in its efforts to "respond to the challenges of history…and…the political demands of its context" (Grossberg, Nelson, & Treichler, 1992, p. 6). In taking the temperature of a particular moment in history, rigorous cultural studies scholarship contextualizes social experience and structural forces in relation to the historical context from which it emerges and helps to constitute.

Cultural Studies origins lie in the historical context of post-war Britain, wherein rapid social and cultural change, industrialization, Americanization, the disruption of traditional class cultures, and new forms of affluence in a rising mass consumer society inspired cultural studies founding scholars (Hoggart, Thompson, Williams, and Hall) to address Britain's shift

toward modernity (Hall, 1990; Turner, 1990). Specifically, they wanted to understand why, "in the wake of the welfare state and commodity affluence in the late 1950s, large sections of the working class voted conservative, thereby aligning themselves to a political ideology which did not appear to represent traditional working class values" (p. 256). In forming an explicitly leftist agenda to intervene in the cultural politics of the moment, cultural studies seminal texts (Hoggart's (1957) *The Uses of Literacy*, Raymond Williams' (1958) *Culture and Society* and *The Long Revolution* (1961), and E.P. Thompson's (1963) *The Making of the English Working Class*, promulgated a more nuanced conceptualization of culture as a site of analysis and a complex field of power relations and political contestation.

As Andrews & Loy (1993) note, "these works rescued the analysis of culture from the blatant disregard of mainstream sociology, the narcotic pessimism of the Frankfurt School, and the neo-conservatism of Leavisite literary criticism" (p. 257). In their own way, each of them played a role in facilitating the revival of subjective experience and the importance of historical materialism (particularly in the case of Williams and Thompson) in mapping the relationships of the individual and society. It was roughly at this juncture that Williams further engaged Marxist thought, eventually integrating Althusserian structuralism and Gramscian culturalism to develop a non-determinist and non-reductionist *cultural materialism* (1977). By simultaneously acknowledging the structural forces that shape everyday life and the resistive aspects of human agency, Williams' dialecticism was bolstered through a re-reading of Gramsci and his notion of culture as a *contested terrain*. Indicating the non-determinism of dominant, residual, and emergent cultural practices and meanings, Williams declared that "no mode of production and therefore no dominant social order…ever in reality includes or exhausts all human practice, human energy, and human intention" (1977, p. 125). This dialectic cultural humanism, informed by his earlier

explication of a structure of feeling that "restored the category of experience to the world" (Barnett, 1976, p. 62), positioned cultural practices as constitutive, and indeed as signifying systems through which "a social order is communicated, reproduced, experienced, and explored" (Williams, 1981, p. 13). Thereafter influenced by Saussurian structural linguistics, semiotics, and post-structuralist signification, cultural studies turn to the popular was rooted in a concern with operations of power and meaning making within the contested terrain of popular culture (Hall, 1981).

As the most prominent figurehead of British cultural studies, Stuart Hall's influence in this regard was instrumental in leading cultural studies out of the impasse of the culturalism and structuralism paradigms. In particular, Hall's *Notes on Deconstructing 'the Popular'* problematized the very concepts of 'culture' and the 'popular' as the sites through which historical relations, traditions, and practices have been struggled over and reconstituted:

> Struggle and resistance – but also, of course, appropriation and ex-propriation. Time and again, what we are really looking at is the active destruction of particular ways of life, and their transformation into something new. 'Cultural change' is a polite euphemism for the process by which some cultural forms and practices are driven out of the centre of popular life, actively marginalized. Rather than simply 'falling into disuse' through the Long March to modernization, things are actively pushed aside, so that something else can take their place (Hall, 1981, pp. 227-228)

In an exceptionally cogent discussion of the "field of culture as a sort of constant battlefield" (p. 233), Hall signals the necessity of synthesizing the two paradigms in order to avoid the pessimistic assumptions of false consciousness, and the essentialist romanticism of cultural resistance. Hall suggests that the question to ask is not what is or is not culture, but rather what distinctions, tensions, and oppositions arise between, and in relation to, the dominant culture and that of the periphery (Hall, 1981). Such a conception of popular culture is critical for any cultural studies analysis because it rightfully draws power, politics, and

meaning into the seemingly innocuous realm of the popular, and does so in a manner that acknowledges the contingency and non-determined state of cultural relations (Hall, 1996).

As Bennet (2009) explains, "the part played by the most taken for granted, sedimented cultural aspects of everyday life are crucially implicated in the processes whereby hegemony is fought for, won, lost, resisted – the field of popular culture is structured by the attempt of the ruling class to win hegemony and by the forms of opposition to this endeavor" (p. 85). The establishment and maintenance of dominant positions of power is reliant upon the continual winning of consent that, while certainly impacted in no small measure by economic determinations and political position, must be won on the contested terrain of popular culture (Bennet, 2009; Hall, 1996). For example, the emergence and popular reproduction of a hegemonic commercialized fitness culture can be viewed both in terms of changing material conditions (mass consumerism, technological innovations, decline of industrial labor, etc.), as well as ideological and political shifts (neoliberal healthism, health crises, preoccupation with bodily aesthetics) that become embedded within communications of popular culture (branded and commercialized promotions of fit bodies and the products/services they promote).

As a politically minded intellectual project, cultural studies engages forms of popular culture precisely because it is also the site in which such articulations might be disrupted and re-articulated to engender progressive social change. This is perhaps why Hall so ardently proclaimed that "popular culture is one of the sites where this struggle for and against the powerful is engaged…it is the arena of consent and resistance. It is partly where hegemony arises, and where it is secured…that is why popular culture matters. Otherwise, to tell you the truth, I don't give a damn about it" (p. 239). It is no surprise then, stemming from early cultural studies work that examined cultural texts and the influence of the mass media in

cultural change, that Hall and his contemporaries attempted to intervene in the circuits of mediated promotion. Specifically, Hall's encoding-decoding model provided an initial framework for deconstructing the contested processes of cultural production and consumption within mass mediated spectacles (Hall, 1980, 1982).

In speaking about the communicative exchange of intended meanings and viewer interpretation (between encoding and decoding), Hall notes that the "correspondence is not given but constructed. It is not natural but the product of an articulation between two distinct moments. And the former cannot determine or guarantee, in a simple sense, which decoding codes will be employed" (1980, p. 136). The non-necessary correspondence between intended meanings and their interpretation indicates a constant fluctuation of dominant hegemonic, negotiated, and oppositional positions from which the ideologies of the mass media are accepted, redefined, or opposed (Hall, 1980; Morley, 1992). As such, cultural studies' analyses of mediated discourse takes account of the grounded aesthetics of meaning making at the site of consumption, relations of production, frameworks of knowledge, and technologies of consumption (Hall, 1980; Willis, 1990). It is through language and symbolic connections in particular that objects, products, and mediated messages are "made to mean" and matter for different individuals (Hall, 1982, p. 67; Williamson, 1978). In this sense, and following a structuralist approach of signification, "meaning is a social production, a practice…language and symbolization is the means by which meaning is produced" (Hall, 1982, p. 67). However, and perhaps more importantly, because meaning is never given and static, but rather produced through historical and material relations, any particular meaning must "win a kind of credibility, legitimacy, or taken for grantedness" in order for it to be continuously produced (Hall, 1982, p. 67).

Moving beyond encoding-decoding however, and most apposite to my radically contextual engagement with BMoreFit, the theory of articulation "can be seen as transforming cultural studies from a model of communication to a theory of contexts" (Slack, 1996, p. 112). While the early culturalist paradigm attempted to oppose the economic reductionism of structural Marxism, it lacked any theoretical specificity to make sense of the anthropological engagement with lived experience and cultural practice (Hall, 1980). Specifically, articulation as theory enabled cultural analysis to engage the relationships of culture and subjectivity within, and in relation to, other superstructural elements without the regressive processes of determination and reductionism (Hall, 1980). As Slack (1996) notes:

> Without having exactly theorized what articulation is and how it works, it becomes the sign that speaks of other possibilities, of other ways of theorizing the elements of a social formation and the relations that constitute it not simply as relations of correspondence (that is, as reductionist and essentialist) but also as relations of non-correspondence and contradiction, and how these relations constitute unities that instantiate relations of dominance and subordination (p. 117)

In this sense, articulation emerged from the inability of cultural analysis to move beyond the limitations of humanist romanticism and the refusal to adopt the structuring principles of reductionism and determination. According to Laclau (1977), articulation posits that there are no necessary correspondences in language or meaning, all links are connotative. However, this post-structuralist emphasis on discursive articulation, to some degree, diffuses the potentialities of political intervention because the non-correspondences of meaning are disconnected from material realities and rendered meaningless (Hall, 1980). It is to this theorization of articulation that Hall challenges Laclau by positing that articulated cultural practices are more complicated and concrete than the abstractions of ideology: "the aim of theoretically informed political practice must surely be to bring about or construct the articulation between social or economic forces and those forms of politics and ideology

which might lead them in practice to intervene in history in a progressive way" (Hall, 1985, p. 95). Specifically, while certainly connotative and non-guaranteed, powerful articulations of meaning suggest that certain ideas have been "made apparent, real, natural, inevitable" within a particular historical conjuncture and context (Grossberg, 1997a).

In seeking progressive social change, rigorous and politically minded cultural studies scholarship also must take account of, and operate within, the conjuncture and contexts in which such struggles take place. According to Grossberg (1997a), "while conjuncturalism seems to describe the social formation, following Althusser as a 'structure in dominance,' it demands that the very concept, as well as any specific conjuncture, be historicized and therefore problematized" (p. 222). By its non-determinateness and non-reductionist theorization of the levels of a structured totality, conjuncturalism accounts for the unequal and unguaranteed articulation of the social formation and cultural relations of power (Grossberg, 1997a). As there are an infinite arrangement of contexts within which relations of power might be examined and understood, radical contextualism suggests that, "an event or practice (even a text) does not exist apart from the forces of the context that constitute it as what it is. Obviously context is not merely background but the very conditions of possibility for something" (Grossberg, 1997b, p. 255). Thus, any analysis of a cultural formation, and its relations of power, must be contextualized in such a manner that everyday practices and meanings are sutured to the range of social forces within which, it is both constituted and constitutive of (Hall, 1985?).

Such an intellectual and political practice is certainly not easy; it requires a scale and scope of intellectual rigor that reflects the use of multifarious theoretical positions and methodological practices best suited to understand the context specific practices and relations of power; it is thus a radically contextual theory of contexts. As Grossberg

mentions (1997b), it is disciplined not in the sense of academic boundary, but in that it requires a disciplined and grounded approach to finding the right intellectual tools to make sense of the contextually specific practices and relations occurring within an empirical site. Or rather, as quoted in Andrews & Loy (1993, p. 257), Grossberg intimates:

> Cultural studies has never been dominated by a single theoretical position, rather it's growth can be described as a perpetual "unity-in- difference" (Grossberg, 1989b, p. 414); it is "something of a hybrid, with multiple influences. . . Moreover, there have always been multiple practices and sites of cultural studies in every context (Grossberg, 1992, p. 17)

Applied to a range of empirical contexts through which culture is experienced and lived (film, art, sport, media, capitalism, religion, politics, family, fitness and health, etc.), conjuncturally specific relations of power may be understood and challenged through the theorization of "how contexts are made, unmade, and remade" (Grossberg, 1997b, p. 261). In this sense, the process of articulation, whereby the social formation, its connections and inter-relationships, are mapped, enables the context to be understood as a structure of power, thereby opening a potential space for new conceptualizations to take its place.

Reflective of cultural studies perpetual dynamism, the early failures to engage with gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, and the cultural physicalities of such embodied positionalities, likewise points to the vital importance of radical contextualism to continually push the boundaries of inquiry in the interests of progressive social change (Turner, 1990; Miller, 2001). For example, the political imperatives and collective movements of 1960s and 1970s feminism propelled cultural studies into anti-essentialist, constructivist, and post-structuralist debates concerning the nature of subjectivity, intersectionality, and identity (Long, 1996). By re-centering its political commitments through feminism, the vitality of cultural studies was sustained by expanding the politics and praxis of challenging the operation of gender power (Long, 1996; Rooney, 1996). The critical works of early feminist

CCCS scholars (for example, Angela McRobbie, Janice Radway, Charlotte Brunsdon, Hobson, etc.) challenged the hegemony of white working class studies of culture, demonstrated the need for new considerations of gender within analyses of power, and saved cultural studies from intellectual and political stagnation (Franklin, Lury, & Stacey, 1996; Rooney, 1996).

Likewise, the subsequent applications of cultural studies theory and method to analyses of race and racism further demonstrate the scope of cultural studies' articulatory theory-method. This is where Carrington (2001), Hall (1996), and Gilroy (1991) in particular have been helpful in refining my theoretical and epistemological positions relative to analyses of race and class within urban spaces like Baltimore. While all speaking in reference to post-war Britain and the emergence of a "new racism" through the New Right's articulation of nationalism, xenophobia, and patriotism as an essentially raced rhetoric of inclusion and exclusion, they locate such ideologies and consciousness within the material changes, policies, and social relations that shaped popular conceptions concerning race, immigration, and the constitution of "one nation." Although Gilroy (1991) critiques Benedict Anderson's 'Imagined Communities' for suggesting that race and nationalism are antithetical in the process of defining the nation, Anderson puts forth a historical materialist conception of race and forms of racism in the sense that they emerge from class concerns rather than those of the nation (an internal rather than an external struggle). Further, I interpret this argument as demonstrating the impact of history (imperialism, colonialism, segregation, racism, etc.) within a materialist framework that encounters racial inequality in the form of unequal access to social institutions (education, housing, employment, etc.) that have structured the terrain upon which contemporary society perpetuates its racial hierarchies and bifurcations. Set within an environment of intense social cleavages, I likewise viewed the racial politics of

BMoreFit fitness pedagogy as being interconnected to dominant (white and middle class) ideas and imperatives concerning the obesity epidemic, demise of the welfare state and rise of private philanthropy, and panics over rising health care costs, which are often uncritically attributed to the personal failures of poorer, and predominantly minority, populations. Further, as much as the body has again become an increasingly central feature within studies of lived experience, identity, and subjectivity (Frank, 1990), considerations of embodiment and performativity emerging from the discipline of Physical Cultural Studies (PCS) played an important role in my interpretive process.

The performative physical in Physical Cultural Studies

At its core, PCS is a politically minded, anti-reductionist, anti-essentialist, methodologically and theoretically rigorous, and radically contextualist project that at various levels, seeks to denaturalize the (active) body as a mere biological organism (Carrington, 2001; Grossberg, 1997a; Hargreaves, 1987). In other words, PCS is concerned with exhuming the active body from biological determinism and contextualizing it within the historical and material conditions of everyday lived experience. Stemming from enlightenment rationalization and modernist impulses of science and progress, the body largely became the domain of scientific, objectivist discourse. Or, as Hargreaves (1987) put it, "scientific discourse and common sense combine to naturalize the 'truth' about the body so that its historicity and its significance in the constitution of social relations is obscured" (p. 139). However, this was not only due to the influence of science and medicine. In American sociology in particular, the rationalized, systematic, and positivistic methods of Auguste Comte, Talcott Parsons, and even C. Wright Mills ignored the body as a vital

constituent in the dialectics of everyday life, preferring to work at the level of macro sociological analysis (Fraser & Greco, 2005).

Subsequently, critical analysis of the body was lost to science resulting in a largely disembodied sociology of sport throughout the 1960's and 1970's (Andrews, 2008; Harris, 2006). Or, as Harris (2006) notes, the single-minded focus on sport marginalized sociologists of sport within kinesiology departments because they failed to engage the social aspects of the body in physical activity, health, and exercise. Thus, while epistemological issues and broader intellectual trends are certainly a point of contestation, contributing to the isolation of sub-disciplines, it is also partly due to this paradigmatic shift in studying society and sport that the interdisciplinary nature of kinesiology has come to neglect the social and cultural aspects of the active body (Harris, 2006; Ingham, 1997). Nevertheless, a renewed interest in the body, as a conduit through which the experience and interrelatedness of physical activity with broader socio-cultural phenomena may be ascertained, has been re-awakened (see, for example, Loy, Andrews, & Rinehart, 1993). In particular, the influence of scholarship emerging from body and society studies, cultural studies, and a re-embodied sociology of sport have, at various levels of analysis, "brought the body back in" as a site through which to engage lived experience (Frank, 1990). As Susan Bordo (1999) notes:

> we need to recognize the body as a cultural form that carries meaning with it…when we look at bodies (including our own in the mirror) we don't just see biological nature at work, but values and ideals, difference and similarities that culture has "written" so to speak, on those bodies (p. 26)

The importance of examining the body as a lived textuality is central to understanding its social, cultural, and historical location as it is articulated to broader meanings and understandings of gender, race, class, sexuality, age, and (dis)ability (Denzin, 2014; Grossberg, 1997a; Hall, 1996; Slack, 1996). However, the poststructuralist influence on the body as a material entity, whose experience is only made meaningful in and through

discourse, has also been challenged by scholars in body studies that envision the body "as a physical phenomena centrally grounded in social action which both shapes, and is shaped by, its social environment" (Shilling, 2003, p. 178). Such an approach, resembling a type of body-centered, culturalist vantage point, or rather, a corporeal fundamentalism rooted in the phenomenology of bodily practice (Hockey & Collinson, 2007), certainly contributes to the re-embodiment of the fields heretofore mentioned. In this sense, PCS draws some theoretical and methodological insights from body and society studies to continually re-orient an approach to the study of the body which takes, "the materiality of human physicality seriously" (Shilling, 2003, p. 178). Nevertheless, working throughout various levels of macro, meso, and micro analysis, PCS cannot be restrained to a determined study of the body which does not account for the ways in which the body has been represented, imbued with meaning, and controlled through diverse arrangements of power and ideology (Hargreaves and Vertinsky, 2007). It is here that British Cultural Studies has had a significant impact upon the focus and intent of PCS scholarship.

Despite the fact that its emergence from the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) was largely a disembodied endeavor, early works by Richard Hoggart, Raymond William, E.P. Thompson, and Stuart Hall were focused on redefining the concept of culture at the level of everyday lived experience. In this sense, the culturalist focus on the individual subject, influenced notably by Gramsci's concept of hegemony, arguably laid the foundation for later works that engaged ethnographic methods, worked through emergent feminisms and identity politics, and theorized the politics of style and opposition to dominant structures (Atkinson & Wilson, 2002; Hargreaves and McDonald, 2000). More recent scholarship that utilizes cultural studies and subcultural theories applied to sport and physical activity also demonstrates the necessarily evolved yet consistently

useful theoretical models provided by CCCS work (Beal, 1995; Donnelly, 2007; Haenfler, 2004; Wheaton, 2007; Wheaton and Beal, 2003). However, PCS is not explicitly focused on sport, instead applying diverse theoretical frameworks and methodological practices to engage the active body as a fluid, complex, and ontologically mixed entity.

While cultural studies emerged in Britain as an intellectual and political response to changing social conditions and political shifts post-WWII (Grossberg, 1997b), PCS is likewise driven by a "commitment to progressive social change" (Miller, 2001, p. 1) that confronts injustices and oppressions within the various contemporary contexts of physical culture (Andrews, 2008). Thus, while the boundaries of the field may be difficult to delineate, indeed this is both a significant strength and potential weakness of the PCS project (Miller, 2001), the "theoretically-informed political practice" that guides PCS work is part of the "unity and difference" of critical thought that places social justice at the forefront (Hall, 1985, p. 95). In Hall's conceptualizations of articulation as method and practice, he notes that the aim of such is to, "construct the articulation between social or economic forces and those forms of politics and ideology which might lead them in practice to intervene in history in a progressive way" (1985, p. 95). To this degree, PCS refutes the study of the active body with *a priori* assumptions and theoretical models, which seek to determine the causality of lived experience. Instead, the incorporation of appropriate theories and methods, drawn from a diverse range of academic disciplines, ensures its continual evolution, vitality, and independence from rigid disciplinization and institutionalization (Grossberg, 1997a; Miller, 2001). My engagement with BMoreFit thus represents an attempt to intervene in this site of physical culture, utilizing the radically undetermined methodologies of the cultural studies 'bricoleur' (Kincheloe, 2001; Kincheloe & McLaren,

2005), to understand the embodied politics of fitness philanthropy and the pedagogical imposition of such ideals at the level of lived experience.

The performative dimensions of research practice also led me to consider how the fusion of cultural studies and embodied auto/ethnography present new possibilities to articulate the structure and agency of contested bodies, and the practices, ideologies, and embodied politics of my own self, in relation to others (Giardina & Newman, 2011). While attempting to see the positive potentialities of this philanthropic endeavor for the less fortunate, my observations of the purpose and structure of the program, and those involved within it, led me to critique manifestations of white privilege and power, the reproduction of neoliberal discourses, and the paternalistic pedagogical approach aimed at reforming the health-based lifestyles of underserved black youth. In the interest of further setting up my interpretive theoretical position, the sections that follow are meant to provide a conjunctural, and context specific, sketch of urban political economy and neoliberal governance, the rise of private philanthropy, and systems of white privilege and power articulated within expressions of racialized thought and action. Subsequently, it was the everyday lived experiences of those I came into contact with that I attempted to locate within these broader structures and forces within "urban" America.

Contextualizing the "Urban": Introducing neoliberalism

Prior to the coalescence of Reagan, Thatcher, and the exploitative global impact of the Washington Consensus, *neoliberalism* was, according to David Harvey (2005), a "theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade" (p. 2).

Stemming from Chicago school economists like Milton Friedman and Friedrich Hayek, the neoliberal promulgation of the free market as an ethic unto itself, capable of guiding all human actions, and maximizing the social good through privatized market transactions has become embedded within, and articulated to, the cultural logics of individualism and a responsibilizing discourse that effectively denies history, context, and environmental impacts (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Giroux, 2005; Harvey, 2005; Jameson, 1991). In other words, the rapacious advancement of 'late' capitalism's cultural logic (Jameson, 1991) hinges upon the unfettered liberation of free markets and the absolvement of government responsibility for the public good, which then positions anything and everything to be privately bought and sold as market commodities, including vital necessities of education, housing, safety and security, health, nutrition, and physical activity (Giroux, 2005; Harvey, 2005).

Further, market concerns have well surpassed social welfare; reflected in the marginalization of the poor while simultaneously profiting from the symbolic capital of their plight in commercial representations of "urban" spaces as "exotic" and "fascinating" productions of these polarizing socio-spatial arrangements (Maharaj, 1999; Massey & Denton, 1998; Yousman, 2003). Such appropriation is articulated through Jameson's (1991) assertion that the third stage of multinational capital naturally requires the expansion and investment of capital in the cultural sphere, meaning that everyday social life and cultural practice becomes commodified and placed for sale on the free market; an unceasing and rapacious appropriation of humanity and history that seeks to place a market value upon everything, including health and wellness. In the contemporary moment of postmodern late capitalist cultural logics (Harvey, 1989; Jameson, 1991), the increasing normalization of neoliberalism further polarizes, constrains, and "others" those incapable of contributing to, or operating within, the consumer capitalist order and established structure of "private

property, individual liberties, and entrepreneurial freedoms" (Harvey, 2005, p. 21; Brenner & Theodore, 2002). As Giroux (2006) suggests, such are the casualties of post-civil rights re-segregation in housing, education, and health care; the poor relegated to the margins of society or justified as 'collateral damage'. Conversely, for those in positions of privilege and power, it is conceivable why such a logic has gained such significant political and economic backing; after all, as Harvey (2005) declares, neoliberalism "was from the very beginning a project to achieve the restoration of class power" (p. 16); the upward redistribution of wealth during financial crises and (un)natural disasters, for example, and increasing social inequality being a persistent feature within global economies adopting its policies (Klein, 2008). Throughout the 1980s and 1990s then, the political economic shift towards neoliberalism (privatization, deregulation, liberalization) functioned to reallocate federal funds away from social welfare and towards the enhancement of free market capitalism that was "liberated from all forms of state interference" (Brenner & Theodore, 2002, p. 2; Ingham, 1985). Thus, within post-industrial cities like Baltimore, the focus of city officials became primarily centered on the facilitation of the private sphere, capital accumulation, and the marketing of cities as tourist destinations (Harvey 2001; Pagano & Browman, 1995). As Peck and Tickell (2002) suggest, urban environments were severely impacted by the processes of "rolling-back" the state, its welfarist functions and its former investments in the social good, and the concomitant "rolling-out" of market deregulations, privatization, and intensified inter-place competition.

In addition to the broader processes and policies reinforcing the logics of free market principles over the public good, the success of the neoliberal project is also highly dependent upon the ability to *"sell itself"* as *the* only viable option to address the financial and moral crises afflicting US cities. Stemming from Francis Fukuyama's declaration of the end

of economic, as well as political, history—the free market triumphantly held up as "the final form of human history itself" (Jameson, 1998, p. 88)—the disastrous application of free market economics in developing countries across the globe (Klein, 2008), has still managed to garner a "largely unquestioned acceptance of neoliberalism as the acknowledged economic *modus operandi*" (Andrews, 1999, p. 74, italics in original). In this sense we are living in a moment of "roll-with-it" neoliberalization in which "political and economic actors have increasingly lost a sense of externality, of alternatives (good and bad) and have mostly accepted the 'governmentality' of the neoliberal formation as the basis for their action" (Keil, 2009, p. 232). Thus, while the processes of roll-back and roll-out neoliberalization continue, they are dialectically linked to this most recent phase, making the acceptance and enforcement of such policies a commonplace and normalized aspect of everyday social, economic, and political life. Subsequently, the cultural ethic of neoliberalism—an ideology of individualism meant to justify the realities of economic liberalism, whereby a public buy-in for personal responsibility is required to legitimate the evisceration of the state—has become an increasingly ubiquitous force within the common sense logics of political parties, popular media, and the public sphere (Coakley, 2011). Within such a rationalized line of thinking, the conflation of civil liberties and freedoms with differentiated consumerism and individual libertarianism stands on the ground that individual incentives are required to increase market competitiveness, maintain an open and thriving free market, and bolster the social good through individual self determination, realized only through the ability to consume (Harvey, 2001; 2005). The free market's sleight-of-hand occurs as the cultural ethic of neoliberalism conveniently shifts responsibility to individual citizens in order to abdicate any obligations for the social good (Ingham, 1985).

While the political and economic imperatives of neoliberalism, heretofore discussed, have been widely documented and critiqued by many renowned scholars, Stuart Hall (2011) is careful to note that neoliberalism "is not one thing. It evolves and diversifies" (p. 12) and as such, should not be wantonly applied in confirmation of its existence and prevalence within the structures of late capitalism (Coakley, 2011; Jameson, 1991). More specifically, while scholarly work focused on the broader impacts of neoliberalism have their place in establishing a theoretical foundation, such discussions do not bring us closer to understanding the myriad ways in which this dominant formation has affected people's everyday lives. It is only by examining how the logics of neoliberalism intersect with everyday human practice, how they create new possibilities and subject positions, and the manner in which individuals negotiate conditions of neoliberalization in various contexts and conjunctures, that we can move beyond identification and toward meaningful praxis. As such, it is critical to understand and challenge the normalization of ideologies like neoliberalism in order to disrupt cultural ingratiation within various localities and contexts (Coakley, 2011).

Such logic posits that while everyone deserves the freedom to pursue their own path and to make their own history, the realization of success and social ascendance is solely dependent upon one's own individual effort. It is a visceral, affective, and easily communicated and understood argument to make, but as Grossberg (1997b) suggests, "that which is the most obvious, the most unquestionable, is often the most saturated by relations of power" (p. 250). Quite simply, there are far too many structural constraints, social hierarchies, and unequal playing fields to accept such an ideology and the inequities it (re)produces unless one is comfortably benefiting from such arrangements. In this sense, discourses of *responsibilization* and meritocracy were commonplace amongst BMoreFit faculty

and the Board of Directors, who also happened to be amongst a more privileged segment of the population who, consciously or not, had taken full advantage of their own racial/ethnic and class positions, and the opportunities that were afforded to them within education, housing, employment, personal health, and so forth. For those capable of unproblematically meeting their fitness/nutrition/health needs through the free market for example, the power of neoliberal worldviews becomes particularly resilient as the commonsensical logic of the body as individual private concern combines with cultural ideals about self made success (Howell & Ingham, 2001; Ingham, 1985). For those who are the targeted subjects of such forms of fitness philanthropy however—those bodies deemed to be abject, deviant, and costly to the healthcare system and middle America—the experience of underprivilege, diminished opportunities, and lack of access means that such an unforgiving logic equates more to an abdication of social responsibility and neglect, rather than individual liberty and self-realization through physical activity and personal fitness.

Deindustrializing spaces and urban apartheid

While inner-city health and activity inequities are rooted in the class-based oppressions of neoliberal free market logics, the outcomes of such processes have disproportionately impacted the African American populace. Regressive forms of social, physiologic, and genomic pathologizing have, according to Wacquant (1994), been routinely mobilized in popular and scientific discourse to explain the statistical over-representation of this ethnic grouping among the nation's incarcerated, illiterate, and impoverished. This form of invective neoliberalism, a seemingly ubiquitous and indeed insidious promulgation of American individualism, purposefully circumvents the historically grounded socio-political arrangements actually responsible for the persistent oppressions and inequalities of a

hierarchical racial formation (Gilroy, 2001; Mercer, 1994). For example, the process of *deindustrialization* encompasses the various trends and shifting priorities that have resulted in the disappearance of a mass labor force; the once abundant industrial employment opportunities for the reserve army of the urban working class being severely diminished. As a result, the process of urban deindustrialization has wrought considerable social, economic, and cultural changes in the post-war era. The suburbanization project for example, of which "white flight" (Frey, 1979) is a general indicator, involved the racially discriminatory practices of redlining and blockbusting (facilitated though the unequal distribution of Federal housing subsidies, and exploitative practices of banking institutions and realty agencies) which purposefully excluded most African Americans from buying into the (suburban) American dream (Pietila, 2010).

Unable to flee the economically, socially, and ecologically deteriorating metropolis, a large percentage of the African American population were left within the struggling confines of a crumbling civic infrastructure. While those with adequate social, economic, or cultural capital were able to escape, the more vulnerable populations of the urban working class were left to face conditions of the unfolding urban dystopia. As noted by Andrews, Silk, and Pitter (2008),

> the onset of the Reagan revolution, a *perfect storm* (or more appropriately, the *perfect nightmare*) of reactionary and regressive political (the denial of continued race-based inequality, justifying the programmatic disassembling of the social welfare system), economic (widespread corporate and civic disinvestment in the American city's traditional industrial cores) and legal (aggressive and egregious policing tactics and judicial targeting) trajectories conspired to exacerbate the social injustices and inequalities that had historically plagued the urban African American populace (p. 286; see also Andrews, Mower, & Silk, 2011)

As the economic base of American cities rapidly declined (decreasing employment and business investment), a concomitant decrease in tax revenues occurred which subsequently

eroded the public services funded by them (education, transportation, recreation, public health). Given the political and economic climate and the rising tide of neoliberal policy solutions, the process of retrenchment and a seemingly relentless ideological shift toward roll-with-it neoliberalization has left an already disadvantaged urban throng even more susceptible to the conditions of urban decay (Keil, 2009). This withdrawal of the social contract, combined with disinvestment and infrastructural neglect, has led to a degree of social and economic isolation directly linked to increased levels of poverty, crime, incarceration rates, and decreasing education, employment, and health outcomes (Giroux, 2005, 2009). Wacquant's (2007) discussion of "hyperghettoization" is relevant here—a shift from the industrial era communal ghetto to the post-industrial hyperghetto—as macro economic and political policies have coalesced to exacerbate the deterioration of distinctly isolated pockets of urban squalor. As Massey and Denton (1998) suggest, this "American Apartheid" is manifest through one-third of the African American population living in spaces of intense–or hyper–segregation:

> They are unambiguously the nation's most spatially isolated and geographically secluded people, suffering extreme segregation across multiple dimensions simultaneously…Ironically, within a large, diverse, and highly mobile post-industrial society such as the United States, blacks living in the heart of the ghetto are among the most isolated people on earth (p. 77)

Along with the impoverished conditions and social/economic isolation of the under-served, gang and drug related crimes, as well as personal and property related crime has become rampant within hypersegregated urban spaces (Williams & Collins, 2001). Given such circumstances, criminal behaviors are but one response through which individuals attempt to counter the deleterious impacts of neoliberal economic and political policy (Williams & Collins, 2001). Through generations and cycles of reproduced poverty, racial and economic isolation, and public/private disinvestment (suburbanization, redlining, blockbusting, etc.),

spaces of urban blight have become synonymous with what is often perceived in the white public imaginary, via mediated popular culture, as the natural pathologies of blackness (Mercer, 1994; Maharaj, 1999; Yousman, 2003). Albeit stemming from America's racialized history (early 1900s American race science for example), the reproduction of such ideas must also be contextualized within the processes of *post-Fordism* and the rampant commodification of difference (Allen, 1996).

Post-Fordism: Reading the embodied commodification of racial difference

Having briefly established a conceptual framework of post-industrialism and neoliberal governance, it is also necessary to historicize and contextualize *post-Fordism* as a condition in which "urban" identities, experiences, cultural meanings and practices have been commodified and exploited—a situation that produces dominant images and readings of urban populations as "threatening" "dangerous" and/or "pathological" (Hall, 1997a; Sandell, 1995). Given that the formation of the BMoreFit program was itself a response to the threat of crime, delinquency, poverty, and ill health perceived to be encroaching upon the more affluent physical landscapes of middle-class, "edge" towns and communities (see Chapter 2), it is important to discuss the representational processes that likely contribute to particular racialized perceptions and hence, influence the decision making of privileged white philanthropists with respect to the helping of urban populations. While none of the white respondents (BMoreFit faculty) in this study indicated that popular mediated representations of the black urban underclass had influenced their perceptions of youth in the program, I would contend that, following Bonilla-Silva (2002), the avoidance of talking about race was one rhetorical strategy through which program faculty sought to minimize its significance and avoid exposing their mediated miseducation about race. In addition, the mediated

promotion of BMoreFit as a benevolent institution engaged in transforming underprivileged "at-risk" youth carried with it, the stereotypical and problematic trope of reforming the lifestyle behaviors of potentially "threatening" black youth. Created in response to crime prevention initiatives in the Director's neighborhood, the assumption that such individuals would be otherwise engaged in unhealthy antisocial behaviors without the targeted interventions of concerned philanthropists is reflective of racialized perceptions that are exacerbated by media culture.

In the contemporary late capitalist moment, commercially inspired representations of blackness have been meticulously managed and marketed to the American populace (Hughes, 2004). America's continued fears and fascinations toward the black body, described by Yousman (2003) as a tension between "Blackophilia" and "Blackophobia," are dramatically played out through the ubiquitous spectacle of mediated entertainment. It is precisely through such platforms (news, talk radio, reality TV, music videos, sports broadcasts, the Internet, etc.) that dichotomized tropes and stereotypical representations concerning an assumed essence of blackness become narrated, commodified, and politicized for particular ends. As noted by Hall (1997a), "people who are in any way significantly different from the majority… seem to be represented through sharply opposed, polarized, binary extremes –good/bad, civilized/primitive, ugly/excessively attractive, repelling-because-different/compelling-because-strange-and-exotic. And they are often required to be both things at the same time!" (p. 229). Such tropes of fear and fascination stem from the material realities of post-industrial spaces and experiences, but perhaps more importantly, the popular representations emanating from a post-fordist shift in regimes of capital accumulation through which urban African American imagery became commercialized (Sandell, 1995; Yousman, 2003).

Stimulated by a crisis of overproduction and the need to inculcate consumer desire in a newly diversified marketplace, post-Fordism emerged as a response to mass marketing strategies which treated entire social groupings as monolithic entities, effectively trying to sell the same products in the same way everywhere. Changes in the scale and scope of industrial manufacturing (Allen, 1996; Gartman, 1998; Murray, 1990), helped facilitate more aesthetically driven and identity-based marketing strategies through which a broader and more fluid consumer base could be reached. Most importantly, this disruption of uniformity was based on a deliberate engagement with Otherness and difference, not only as a means to engage black consumer markets, but more specifically as the method through which to address a growing interest in exotica amongst mainstream cultural intermediaries (Gilroy, 2001). Or, as Davidson (1992) put it, capitalism—in its post-fordist iteration—has "fallen in love with difference" (p. 199). As one of the driving forces indicative of this post-fordist transformation of the U.S. economy (Allen, 1996; Gartman, 1998; Murray, 1990), the diversifying logic of capital accumulation led to an aggressive and sweeping commodification of *difference* through which consumers could experience "the pleasures of the transgressive Other" (Hall, 1992b, p. 31). In other words, the advanced state of U.S. consumer culture determined a "profound cultural revolution" wherein social distinction was sought through the consumption of alternatives to the normative; cultural products that are adorned with symbolic value through the significations of *alterity* (Hall, 1992b, p. 34). In particular, and stemming from the political and cultural movements of the 1960s and 1970s, unapologetic and expressive forms of blackness have become a considerable force in mainstream commercial culture as symbols of a seemingly authentic notion of difference (Gilroy, 2001; Hall, 1992). In this way however, the terms 'African American' and 'Black' have become adjectives euphemistically, and seemingly indelibly, associated with markers of the *inner city*

(another raced euphemism); unemployment, crime, welfare dependency, drugs, and basketball (Cole, 1996; Cole & King, 1998, 1999).

Despite evidence to the contrary, middle-class American sensibilities routinely succumb to the essentialist assumption that the majority of the African American population resides in isolated ghettos of poverty, crime, drugs, and despair. Within promotional culture then, the distinction between image and reality becomes inconsequential:

> [W]hether or not the images represent the life experience of most Blacks is immaterial. What is most important is not authenticity but the appearance of authenticity. *For Whites who grow up imagining the Black world as a world of violence and chaos, the more brutal the imagery, the more true-to-life it seems to be* (Yousman, 2003, pp. 378-379, emphasis added)

Recourse to the raced urban simulacra belies the fact that post-Fordism is no more progressive in its willingness to engage, and indeed champion the experience of the racial Other, than earlier phases of capitalist evolution. Whether referring to the mainstream commercial exploitation of specifically "urban" creative forms such as music, dance, art, or sport, the post-Fordist corporation is simply motivated by an acknowledgement that within the contemporary moment, "Black equals cool equals revenue" (Hughes, 2004, p. 172). In the wake of mass production and urban restructuring, what is left behind and recouped as yet "another resource appropriated by the colonizer" (hooks, 1994, p. 150), is the stereotypical signifiers and associated aesthetics of the urban African American experience (socio-spatial location; family history and constitution; and, preferences for particular cultural practices, forms of attire, music, hair style, and modes of verbal and non-verbal communication). In both commercialized and politicized frameworks, such representations function to simultaneously market the black body through the association of particular cultural referents, signifying alterity, exoticness and defiance, while also mobilizing those

same characteristics in political discourse to validate revanchist policies of urban renewal and governance (hooks, 1992; Watts & Orbe, 2002; Yousman, 2003).

It is through this general framework that I interpreted the comments of some BMoreFit faculty as being informed by popular mediated representations of African Americans, in particular, those representations that suggest an essentialized connection with deviance, laziness, and aggression (Maharaj, 1999; Yousman, 2003). Further, and as a result of being spatially and culturally disconnected from the everyday practices of those inhabiting the communities from which students hail, this lack of familiarity contributed to several assumptions on the part of faculty who demonstrated a reluctance to acknowledge the impact of social structure and historical process in the contemporary manifestations of racial inequality. This lack of familiarity with the cultural histories and experiences of oppressed, marginalized, and subsequently *targeted* groups of people, is problematically manifest within relations of charity and philanthropic intention (Poppendieck, 1998). It is for this reason that questioning the motives, processes, and outcomes of such organizations becomes both necessary and precarious. Although a critique of charitable organizations may seem an unpopular idea, there is something alarming about enterprises which are uncritically praised, perceived to be wholly innocuous, and unquestioned as a benefit to the whole of society. As Samantha King (2001, 2004, 2008) has presciently demonstrated, there is a dire need to deconstruct and critically examine the power relations inherent to such activities, precisely because they are so often taken for granted and accepted as noble causes, especially when the targets of outreach represent historically oppressed or marginalized groups. To further problematize the issue, heightened concerns over health, fitness, and the body have been mobilized within institutions that define what social causes are worthy of (financial) support

and commercial popularization, in order to target particular diseases or pathologies (i.e., "breast cancer" or "childhood obesity" for example).

Deconstructing philanthropy

Within an intensified climate of budgetary crisis on State and Federal levels, continual repeals to the basic provisions of the social contract, and retrenchment of services for the public good (Giroux, 2009), the ever increasing gap between the haves and the have-nots, particularly within America's inner cities, has produced many unique and contradictory sets of responses. Overall, the concept of charitable giving or philanthropy was once defined as a "love of mankind; the disposition or active effort to promote the happiness and well-being of others; practical benevolence" in the 1909 iteration of the Oxford English Dictionary. Today, the same publication, and certainly reflective of the primacy of market currency within an increasingly detached and individualized culture, defines philanthropy as "the desire to promote the welfare of others, expressed especially by the generous donation of money to good causes" (see www.oxforddictionaries.com). As an outgrowth of (post) industrial capitalists' (Ford, Carnegie, Rockefeller, and more recently Gates) desires to utilize their fortunes to combat various social problems—many of which were ironically caused by the very companies, production-consumption processes, and 'corporate-friendly' political economic system exacerbating such ills in the first place—the contemporary efforts and influence of privileged philanthropists within civil society must be viewed with caution, not least because their particular form of philanthropic endeavor is coming to define the concept altogether. As Kent & Walker (2010) note, philanthropy is located "along the voluntary dimension of the responsibility framework and has not always been linked to profits or the ethical culture…In fact, the historical approach to philanthropy has separated giving to

society from business performance" (p. 393). While earlier iterations of charity pursued by industrial capitalists and/or private philanthropists may have had greater intentions for the common good (notwithstanding connections to early 20th century forms of social control), they were likely reflective of their historical conjunctures in which social welfarism and collectivism were more commonly accepted ideological components of civil society.

Conversely, within our contemporary moment of neoliberalization, market primacy, and all things individual, Morvaridi (2012) suggests that, "under neo-liberalism the notion of philanthropy is fundamentally different in that it is embedded in a concept of governance through partnerships that involve private sector interests and devolve power to non-state actors" (p. 245). In this quite apt formulation of modern philanthropy, Morvaridi points to the ideological shifting of responsibility from government intervention to a more strategic, collaborative, and results-driven approach espoused by privatized institutions. When carried out by non-state actors (private corporations, individual philanthropists, non-profits, and public-private partnerships), it is suggested that such initiatives will lead to more effective outcomes, but must also be questioned due to the incongruities of private sector interests and public benefit. As such, the State's relinquishing of responsibility for the public good into the hands of private companies and individual philanthropists reflects more than just the modernist drive for greater and ever increasing efficiency. Reflective of Jameson's (1991) conception of the third stage of multinational capital, or late capitalism, private sector interests and market logics have continually extended into new spheres of social life, including the privatization of social welfare and health promotion.

While traditional philanthropy was motivated in part, by "the belief that giving would protect capitalism from socialism" (Morvaridi, 2012, p. 245), and satiate the masses with the "bread and circus" of charitable giving, contemporary "capitalist philanthropy" is motivated

more by the realization that, in a highly commercialized market society, philanthropic endeavors can also contribute to the development of symbolic capital and further ingratiate business principles into the everyday machinations of social life. Or, as Morvaridi (2012) notes, capitalist philanthropy differs from its traditional counterpart in "its application of business principles and approaches to identify 'innovative' solutions to complex problems" that are intended to "fix" social ills and "support social transformation" that will ultimately be *good for business"* (p. 245, italics added). The emphasis on *innovation* is critical here since many voluntary sector initiatives are dependent upon the successful awarding of grant money from large philanthropic organizations that determine what social problems, and forms of "innovative" solutions to address those problems, are worthy of funding. Within the marketing literature for example, Ricks (2005) defined corporate philanthropy as "A discretionary responsibility of a firm that involves choosing how it will voluntarily allocate resources to charitable or social service activities in order to reach marketing and other business related objectives for which there are no clear social expectations as to how the firm should perform" (p. 122). Terms such as "capitalist philanthropy", "venture philanthropy" (Letts, Ryan, & Grossman, 1997), "entrepreneurial philanthropy" (Harvey et al., 2011), "strategic philanthropy" (Sandfort, 2008), or "philanthrocapitalism" (Bishop, 2008), have been invented to describe the coinciding of private interests to supposedly balance the scale of inequality (or at least, provide an affective spectacle of altruistic concern for the underprivileged) in such a way as to ensure the continued functioning of the market as the final form of human civilization (Jameson, 1991). Importantly, such efforts provide an affective and publically viable spectacle of altruistic concern for the underprivileged.

Drawing upon the work of Antonio Gramsci (1971, 2009[1971]), who viewed philanthropy as yet another instrument of hegemonic power, it becomes possible to envision

the vast emergence of Baltimore's voluntary sector as more than a simplistic, idealized, and mediated promotion of non-profit actors and organizations seeking to promote the happiness and well being of others. Similar to Sperber's (2000) critique of rampant sporting commercialization and exploitation in collegiate athletics, the "beer and circus" of privatized philanthropy also offers to the public, a *spectacle* of benevolence, an operation of hegemony, that effectively draws attention away from the material conditions of economic and political inequity. According to this view, charitable organizations and private philanthropists are not primarily concerned with the alleviation of social ills, but rather, through their investments in combating social problems (disease, poverty, homelessness, crime, etc.), attempt to influence public policy, public opinion, and political process to serve their interests, which as Gramsci (1971) would suggest, is more effectively realized through consensus rather than force. Even when only capable of reaching a minute fraction of the population (as was the case with BMoreFit), the often uncritical and laudatory mediated promotion of philanthropic initiatives for the less fortunate positions givers as beyond reproach. In the wake of government retrenchment, it is conceivable why such a view has gained prominence and why the responsibilities of serving the public good is increasingly falling under the purview of voluntary sector efforts. Contextually located within the historical conjunctures of neoliberalization, the view that targeted individually focused initiatives of *responsibilization* are best suited to help the underserved *help themselves* suggests a process of normalizing consent for the evisceration of public provision (Gramsci, 1971; Rose, 1999, 2000).

To take this idea further, Bourdieu (2001a, p. 15) suggests that 'the gratuitous gift does not exist,' and that in most cases, and particularly at the level of corporate philanthropy, the act of giving is connected to the assumption of reciprocation in some form, or the realization of a return on investment, albeit material or symbolic in nature. Recent

scholarship in the fields of management and marketing have acknowledged the role of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs in making the act of charity and community outreach a commonly accepted, and indeed, necessary business practice that reflects a shift from, "viewing philanthropic initiatives from a predominantly altruistic perspective to a more strategically driven focus (Genest, 2005; Lubinsky & Doherty, 2011; Morvaridi, 2012; Ricks, 2005; Saiia, Carroll, & Buchholtz, 2003; Smith, 2003). In this sense, the lines between for-profit activities that form the basis of all commercial entities, and the philanthropic not-for-profit initiatives they occasionally pursue, are becoming increasingly blurred and sometimes indistinguishable as core investments in the development of capital (Lubinsky & Doherty, 2011; Morvaridi, 2012). Therefore, not only is the performative act of philanthropy suspect in terms of its potential to leverage forms of power (influencing public opinion, (re)producing unequal power relations through dependencies, justifying public retrenchment, etc.), but its historical formation, and intended purposes, has followed a concomitant trajectory of white privilege and power. In other words, the power differentials inherent to the enterprise of philanthropy mirror the already existing hierarchies of an American racial formation. Thus, receivers of aid (most often dispossessed people of color) are often pressured, if not required, to humbly accept and willingly thank the very people who have benefitted from their own oppression through historically entrenched systems of inequality and social division.

White privilege and philanthropic (neo)colonization

> racial myths are part of the mind-set that helps whites interpret their experiences and that influences behavior, alters emotions and shapes what whites see and do not see (Feagin and Vera, 1995, p. 12)
>
> in societies characterized by the sort of racial inequalities prevalent in the USA, disadvantaged groups can seek strength in collective action based on

> common experiences of subjugation (1997:380). Privileged groups, in contrast, can think of themselves as individuals, and so obscure the privileges they gain from group membership (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002, p. 70)
>
> Whiteness is, of course, a delusion, a scientific and cultural fiction that like all racial identities has no valid foundation in biology or anthropology. Whiteness is, however, a social fact, an identity created and continued with all-too-real consequences for the distribution of wealth, prestige, and opportunity (Lipsitz, 2006, p. vii)

Stemming from Gramsci's critique of philanthropy as a cleverly disguised tactic in the systematic reproduction of hegemony (1971), it is also important to consider the historical and contemporary contexts of white power and privilege and their relevance for understanding the role of charity in urban environments. In most cases, various forms of urban philanthropy, charitable outreach programs, and non-profit ventures that emerge as a response to social ills are imagined and constructed from the perspective of those in positions of power and privilege. As such, the solutions to "urban problems" within a neoliberal economic and political context, are more often than not, conceived by, and enacted through, the very same institutions which govern populations according to dominant, and taken for granted, assumptions concerning race/ethnicity, the body, health, and personal responsibility. Indeed, philanthropic interventions have increasingly come to resemble governing structures, espouse business principles, and operate with a results-driven focus that, while taking up the role of public provision left behind by government retrenchment, follows a competitive neoliberal structure that limits participation only to those deemed most deserving and/or promising (Morvaridi, 2012). In this way, the majority of the afflicted population, those citizens once provided with the basic rights of health, recreation, and leisure as part of their very citizenship, are blamed for their failure to develop an entrepreneurial subjectivity with regard to their own health and fitness (Howell & Ingham, 2001; Ingham, 1985; Rose, 1996).

From a privileged white racial frame (Feagin, 2013), problems of crime, poverty, ill health, low levels of fitness, and other health-related lifestyle factors, emerging within underprivileged urban environments, are often explained and rationalized through appeals to some mythologized form of race specific pathology, or the result of simple laziness by those choosing not to participate in productive pursuits to better mind and body. In either case, privileged philanthropists and/or those occupying and embodying various forms of social privilege as a result of their racial and class positions, tend to perceive such issues (how and why they exist) through dominant frames of reference that reflect and uphold their own ways of thinking and being. As Wingfield and Feagin (2012) note, the white racial frame,

> …allows whites to collude in or rationalize the systemic processes that facilitate and maintain an ongoing racial privilege and inequality (Feagin, 2006, 2010b). White racial framing typically obscures attention to the existence and consequences of these deep structural inequalities, and offers those who use it a convenient language, rationale, and perspective for maintaining everyday discrimination and related racist practices (p. 2).

What is particularly important to consider here are the connections between race and class, the physical body, and the power to define and attach meaning to the body based on its appearance (its color, size, shape, etc.), socio-spatial location, and capacity to participate in activities of self-betterment. For example, Stuart Hall's (1997b) notion of race as a floating signifier, or, that "race works like a language," points to the slipperiness of racial classification and meaning making practices that, given their relational constructs within a signifying field, remain in a "constant process of redefinition and appropriation" (p. 8). With regard to such processes, I was concerned with the ways in which BMoreFit faculty, and other voluntary sector representatives I spoke with, viewed the significance of race as a facilitating or delimiting factor in the material outcomes of health, fitness, and the body; including how they viewed their own achievements of health and occupational success in relation to those they sought to help.

In viewing the issue of privileged white philanthropy from a historical materialist perspective (see methods in Appendix), it is important to consider how histories of colonialism and (scientific) racism continue to influence contemporary structures of white power, including those of a philanthropic orientation that are geared towards assisting underprivileged groups. With respect to the historical legacies of "white paternalism" and the social construction of racialized "otherness", John Nauright (2013) suggests that,

> Displaying native peoples as exotic, primitive, or backward confirmed and legitimated Western colonial expansion and conquest as the "white man's burden" to bring "civilization" to the rest of the world. The civilizing mission was supported by a biological imperative (Shilling, 1993, p. 57) and thus the body became the primary site where the construction of the exotic Other occurred. As Z.S. Strother (1999: 37) argues "The body became the signifier of the real, the authentic. Its choreographed presence validated the colonial imagination." The Western Gaze over a long period of time was trained to see the African [American] body as Other and different, labeled "wild" and "primitive" (pp. 9-10).

While certainly reflecting a starkly different historical racialized context, I suggest that Nauright's comments have relevance for examining the contemporary body politics of privileged white philanthropists seeking to reform the health and lifestyle behaviors of poorer, and predominantly black, communities. The role of science within fitness and health discourses for example, provides a justification for the "civilizing mission" of health promotion in which, mostly white privileged philanthropists see, and react to, "urban" health statistics that without contextualization, can be inferred as "black pathologies" requiring "appropriate" and scientifically based, interventions (Andrews, Silk, & Pitter, 2008; Feagin & Vera, 1995; Hall, 1997a, 1997b). In this sense, because religious and anthropological discourse failed to fully construct an unimpeachable racial logic concerning genetic causality post-enlightenment, scientific rationality became the most powerful instrument marking socially constructed ideas about race as biologically inherent and essential (Hall, 1997a; McDonald, 2005). As an easily discernable embodied characteristic of difference, the

meanings articulated to skin color have persisted, and been reformulated within our contemporary conjuncture of health crisis, "by frequently grounding the logic of race, not in social relations, but in the realm of visibility as apparently locatable in the body" (McDonald, 2005, p. 248; Fanon, 1967; Wiegman, 1995). This process of racial subjectification persists within notions of a natural racial biology (for example, see Entine, 2000) despite the successful mapping of the human genome, which found that all human beings share 99.9% of the same DNA sequence (see, for example, Human Genome project).

When ideas of racial biology are articulated within conversations about health disparities between racial groups, the biological argument serves to uncritically explain and rationalize staggering rates of disease, infant mortality, and premature death amongst the urban African American populace as compared to their white counterparts (Baltimore City Health Department, 2008; Linsky, 2008). From such a perspective, the realities of ill health amongst this population are then perceived as the normal outcomes of a perceived racial pathology, rather than connected to conditions of extreme segregation and inequitable systems of late capitalist urban restructuring (Hall, 1997a; Harvey, 2001; Jameson, 1991; Silk & Andrews, 2006). Subsequently, I argue that contemporary responses to the crises of ill health and mortality in urban spaces—informed by the logics of healthism and a framework of neoliberalization—reflects a paternalistic impulse that is underpinned by the assumptions and worldviews of those benefiting from the privileges of whiteness (Lipsitz, 2006). Privatized assistance for those in poorer, unhealthy, and disproportionately minority populations becomes discursively framed as an optional social activity that, for those freely giving their time and money, bestows social capital upon the giver and/or charitable organization. Similar to the nature of corporate philanthropy previously discussed, the efforts of private philanthropists and volunteers within this framework are most often met

with the receipt of tangible and intangible social, cultural, or economic benefits for their goodwill (Lubinsky & Doherty, 2011; Morvaridi, 2012). The construction and validation of scientific knowledge then becomes critical since authoritative voices (scholars, scientists, policy makers, non-profit leaders, etc.) influence public opinion, policy making, and strategies concerning the most appropriate and effective methods to intervene in "urban problems" that have social functions beyond individual charity (Pitter & Andrews, 1997: Poppendieck, 1998).

What is particularly troubling about the historical legacies of the "civilizing mission" of white colonists towards the objectified bodies of non-white peoples, is the manner in which this racial logic seeps into contemporary forms of voluntarism and philanthropy that now comprise a core source of social welfare for struggling populations. To this degree, it was alarming at times to see and hear the manner in which BMoreFit faculty reproduced hierarchies of race, class, and social status through their embodied performances of an idealized middle class, white, bodily hexis (Bourdieu, 1984). Looking through the lens of critical race theories and the relatively recent strand of whiteness studies (see, for example, Brayton, 2005; Denison & Markula, 2005; Fusco, 2005; McDonald, 2005), it became possible to observe the unspoken advantages, privileged mindset, and taken for granted assumptions many of the adults involved with BMoreFit upheld through their normalized everyday routines (how they expressed their opinions about health issues, body language, and so forth). Further, I was able to see how these embodied activities were not only incongruent with the experiences, beliefs, and attitudes of students, but that they (intentionally or not) reinforced a social hierarchy within the gym space that effectively subordinated students to the authority of these figures. More specifically, this authority sought to impose particular ways of thinking about, acting upon, and perceiving issues of fitness, health, nutrition, the

obesity "epidemic", health disparities, "urban problems," and the supposed "non-relevance of race" when it comes to an individual's capacity to be healthy, exercise, and eat the "right" kinds of food.

This perspective of authoritative certainty, I am arguing, emerges from the sensibilities of white privilege and the assumptions of divine right that, within a context of philanthropy, produce a value-laden dichotomy between benevolent givers and the receivers of aid and assistance (Lipsitz, 2006; Poppendieck, 1998). For example, in a study investigating whiteness and service learning, Endres and Gould (2009) found that white college students who engaged in various service learning projects on behalf of the less fortunate tended to rehearse, and reaffirm, their white privilege despite having been exposed to critical theories of whiteness prior to their participation. Rather than viewing their engagement with underprivileged groups as a form of collective activism, the acknowledgement of their white privileged position within a context of charitable giving, actually served to re-inscribe social and racial hierarchies and unequal power dynamics. As the authors suggest, "Framing an experience as charity creates a hierarchy between privileged students and the communities that supposedly need the service. This hierarchical relationship has the potential to reinforce racial stereotypes, thus allowing students to position themselves as superior and view the communities with which they work as having deficits" (Endres & Gould, 2009, p. 422). Within the context of BMoreFit, a similar manner of thinking reveled itself through the ways the Director, Board members, and faculty instructors spoke about their roles within the organization and in relation to those they sought to help (underprivileged and "at-risk" urban youth). In subsequent chapters I will explicate how those participating in BMoreFit on the side of philanthropic giver, not only demonstrated an acceptance of their privileged position, and the opportunity that this gave

them to help the less fortunate, but within the heavily moralized discursive context of health and fitness, tended to also demand and reinforce the idea that they would *only* help those who were also *willing to help themselves*.

In other words, this form of private sector, creative voluntarism, unrestrained by the former responsibilities of government provision for *all* citizens, reflects the logics of meritocratic selectivity and sovereign individuality that neoliberal healthism requires from those in need and/or seeking help (Gray, 2009; Rose, 1996, 1999; Briggs & Hallin, 2007). In tracing the prolific normalization of this "help yourself" mentality, the late Alan Ingham, speaking about the shift towards the New Right's "right thinking" neoliberal democracy in the 80s, suggested that, amidst the fiscal crisis of the state, an attitude of individual moral responsibility came to replace the idea that "social problems required social solutions" (1985, p. 46). In this framework, any response to, or form of provision for, social problems and/or those individuals requiring a social safety net, must "distinguish between the triers and the malingerers, between the genuine and the profligate" (Ingham, 1985, p. 47) to ensure that aid is provided only to those who are perceived as most deserving, and willing, to acquiesce to the conditions of support and strive to become an active participant in free market exchange. Given the prevalence of this individualistic logic amongst fitness professionals in particular—the philosophies of individual responsibility providing a simple, yet powerful, corollary to fitness practices and bodywork—it was not surprising that BMoreFit began soliciting applications from younger high school students after the 'test-pilot' group of "high school dropouts" proved problematic (see chapter 2). Of course, it would be implausible to expect non-profits like BMoreFit to provide the means for a greater number of individuals to receive the forms of assistance and training they provide; many non-profits are in a similar

situation of financial and time limitations, limited staff, and inadequate and/or unguaranteed funding sources.

Further, because voluntary sector provision is just that, voluntary, and not required, or regulated by state institutions, such organizations reserve the right to control who they want to help, how they want to help them, and can generally avoid issues of accountability and responsibility for equitable provision. While other forms of voluntary charity work might (re)produce more easily discernable social hierarchies from processes of privileged givers bestowing aid upon those who cannot readily help themselves (i.e., the homeless, drug addicted, disabled, elderly, etc.), there is a uniquely complicated interplay of privileged and underprivileged subjects within the realm of fitness philanthropy and exercise culture. In other words, *I contend that philanthropic efforts aimed at healthy lifestyle reformation reveal attitudes of superiority and divine right that are exacerbated by powerful discursive and pedagogical regimes of fitness and health, informed by an unimpeachable "truth" of (exercise) science,* which serves to justify and reinforce a commonly accepted and dominant way of thinking about, and managing, the private body (Andrews, 2008). More specifically, I am suggesting, following Ingham (1985), that the concept of the sovereign individual—informed by the rampant diffusion of neoliberalized thinking into nearly every social space and institution of contemporary life—is particularly flawed in relation to concerns about health because "it incorporates an assumption that voluntaristic adjustments in lifestyle can substitute for state intervention in alleviating structural impediments to well-being" (p. 47). Thus, health and fitness professionals engaged in forms of "fitness philanthropy" carry tremendous power in terms of reinforcing and normalizing the logics of neoliberal healthism because they are not only providing assistance to the underprivileged (in the form of education and training), but are simultaneously inculcating particular *ways of thinking* about public health issues that are

inherently political (they are considered to be "truth") and reflective of their worldview and interests. To this end, the philanthropic act itself appears within a narrow ontology of divine right and universal truth (i.e., the individual's responsibility towards the proper care and maintenance of the body, according to dominant authority), seeking only to help those that are most willing to likewise accept and reproduce this logic. Before deconstructing such phenomena within BMoreFit however, mapping the context of popularized responsibilizing discourses in chapter one provides an important underpinning to the particular discourses, regulations, and pedagogical routines I observed, and engaged with, inside the BAC, and with BMoreFit participants.

CHAPTER ONE – "URBAN PROBLEMS" AND PHILANTHOPIC INTERVENTIONS OF CORPOREAL RESPONSIBILIZATION

> Even the New York Times ran a story in the summer of 2007 that contained not only a welcome endorsement of Gilded Age greed but also praise for a growing class of outrageously rich chief executives, financiers, and entrepreneurs, described as 'having a flair for business, successfully [breaking] through the stultifying constraints that flowed from the New Deal' and using 'their successes and their *philanthropy* [to make] government less important than it once was' (Giroux, 2009, pp. 1-2, italics added).

It is no secret that the largest, and most influential, philanthropic organizations are those with significant financial support, coming from the sort of elite class of individuals Giroux describes. To borrow C. Wright Mills' (1956) term, the "power elite"—those occupying influential positions of power, prestige, and affluence—have increasingly embedded the concept of philanthropic giving and intervention within the logics and dictates of the free market. In what has been aptly termed "capitalist philanthropy" (Morvaridi, 2012), scholars note that the boundaries separating a firm's profit-minded business activities and non-profit charitable activities have become increasingly blurred (King, 2001; Lubinsky, 2011). Thus, a number of broader political economic processes and forces can be linked to the dynamic and ever-shifting formation of philanthropy within different spatial contexts. For example, Samantha King's (2001, 2004, 2008) work on breast cancer philanthropy reveals layers of complexity and contradiction with regard to cause-related marketing and corporate philanthropy. Importantly, she notes several key factors that have not only influenced the salient emergence of breast cancer philanthropy, via Susan G. Komen's Race for the Cure, but arguably the entire landscape of philanthropic interventions and charitable giving in the post-war era (King, 2001). Namely, these include historical and contemporary discourses that position charity as a distinctively American ethical practice, the gradual demise of civil society and trust in community structures, the

debilitating neoliberal policy shifts of 1980s Reaganomics, and more recently, the savvy of marketing industries that increasingly conflate acts of charitable giving with those of private consumption, leisure practice, and social networking (King, 2001, 2004, 2008).

In short, and precisely because the very practice of philanthropy is often perceived as an innocuous, innocent, even righteous endeavor, it should be viewed with a cautious eye in terms of its overall purpose and impact. With the expanding role and function of the voluntary sector in picking up government slack concomitant to broader neoliberalization processes (King, 2001; Rose, 1996; Zizek, 2009), it is arguably, more vital than ever, to question and critique such institutions to uncover power imbalances and inequities that are more likely to be overlooked or ignored. As Grossberg (1997b) suggests, "that which is the most obvious, the most unquestionable, is often the most saturated by relations of power" (p. 250). As such, *this chapter seeks to problematize the dominant ideologies underpinning health responsibilization, through public-private discourses of voluntarism within Baltimore (non-profit mission statements, website-based health promotions, and other periodicals), in order to better deconstruct the pedagogical mobilization of such discourse within the programming of philanthropic organizations like BMoreFit.* This is not always an easy task however, since it is often assumed that any form of charitable giving must be inherently good and positive. To then critique the shortcomings in an organization that is for the most part "doing good" for the less fortunate, is not likely to be welcomed warmly, or welcomed at all. In fact, and as will be discussed in subsequent chapters, this is precisely the kind of reception I sometimes encountered within my engagements with the leadership of BMoreFit, and other Baltimore non-profits (Safe & Sound, Playworks, Y of Central Maryland, and the Department of Parks & Recreation), whenever I attempted to ask questions, or make suggestions concerning the effectiveness of these variegated strategies of intervention.

The primary concern regarding organizations such as BMoreFit, is how the leaders of such philanthropic, non-profits determine *for themselves* what manner of social problems to target, how to intervene, organizational structure and programming, codes of "right" conduct, and discourses (mission statements, mottos, organizational goals, etc.) that define organizational purpose and identity. This focus leads into an overall critique of charitable enterprise, and particularly the emergence of pedagogically focused "fitness philanthropy," because the formation of BMoreFit was a direct result of like-minded individuals, identifying a pressing social issue (youth delinquency, crime, violence, and unhealthy behaviors) for which a specific solution was determined. The fact that this form of intervention reflected the knowledge, capacities, and familiarity of those who created it (a program of pedagogical fitness instruction intended to alter the behavior, lifestyle, and mindset of "at-risk" youth), and was rarely questioned, is a key point of consideration.

Further, in the event that a voluntary organization's leadership, and to some extent membership/volunteers, reflect a homogenous collectivity of privileged individuals that share common experiences—shaped by a distance from necessity that permits extensive charitable involvement along axes of ethnicity, race, social class, gender, sexuality, education, age, ability, and so forth—it is also likely that the actual formation of the intervention will reflect the interests, perspectives, and values of such individuals. What then does this mean for underprivileged populations or groups that are targeted by such interventions? What is the affect of dominant discourses, pedagogies, and embodied politics emerging within the process of privileged philanthropists bestowing knowledge, goods, or services upon targeted groups? While specifically examining the BMoreFit organization as a microcosm of the broader landscape of body-focused non-profit initiatives (health, fitness, nutrition, and sport) in Baltimore, I stumbled upon common discourses, ideologies, and assumptions about

health and fitness that I argue, reflect broader patterns of neoliberalization through repetitive discourses of (health) responsibilization (Rose, 1996; Cheek, 2008). Subsequently, I am broadly concerned here with the pedagogical and discursive power that attends the act of charitable giving, and how powerful groups use their philanthropy to influence the underprivileged and the society at large.

Mapping voluntary discourse

To understand the emergence, and significance, of the BMoreFit program, it is necessary to provide a discursive contextual mapping of a representative sample of non-profit health and fitness organizations within Baltimore City's Physical Activity Infrastructure (PAI). Viewed as a microcosm of shifting politico-economic priorities and creative forms of intervention in urban environments, the rapid emergence and transformation of BMoreFit reflects both voluntary sector challenges and the ideological assumptions of Baltimore's elite. As such, this chapter establishes a macro-level contextual framework of economic, political, and social structures within the highly polarized environments of Baltimore city and its rapidly growing voluntary sector. Drawing judiciously from literature on neoliberalism, urban space, and the contemporary American city (for example, Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Giroux, 2005; Gough, 2002; Harvey, 2001, 2005; Keil, 2009; Manalansan, 2005; Peck & Tickell, 2002; Silk, 2004; Silk, 2010; Silk & Amis, 2005), this chapter first articulates the machinations of a shifting and diffuse neoliberalism to the contemporary conditions of racial/ethnic segregation, poverty, ill health, and physical inactivity within urban environments.

Importantly, this discussion makes use of a strand of research in critical public health that illuminates the variegated discursive strategies of "healthism" (for example, Briggs &

Hallin, 2007; Cheek, 2008; Roy, 2008) in as much as the extension of the neoliberal project (Peck & Tickell, 2002) has thoroughly infiltrated public discourses and public policies pertaining to the self-care and self-maintenance of the body as the sole responsibility of the individual (Howell & Ingham, 2001). Further, this chapter provides a historical-dialectic materialist reading (see methods in Appendix) of de-industrializing processes, and what Wacquant (2007) has referred to as "hyper-segregation" and "hyper-ghettoization" leading to significant health inequalities between proximal Baltimore City neighborhoods (Linsky, 2008; Squires & Kubrin, 2005). Or rather, denoting the conditions of post-industrialization, attention is paid to articulating the historical processes and forces through which, Baltimore's intense social cleavages have been rooted, and subsequently exacerbated, through decades of neoliberal policy and programming (Pietila, 2010; Frey, 1979). Using the mission statements and program information from several prominent non-profit organizations, this chapter maps the contemporary landscape of urban regeneration and renewal, and more specifically, the intensifying preoccupation with interventionist practices and programs aimed at the alleviation of various social ills and pathologies (crime, poverty, poor health, inactivity, obesity, etc.). As Peck & Tickell (2002) suggest, the "stretching of the neoliberal policy repertoire" has resulted in the,

> …selective appropriation of "community" and non-market metrics, the establishment of social-capital discourses and techniques, the incorporation (and underwriting) of local-governance and partnership-based modes of policy development and program delivery in areas like urban regeneration and social welfare, the mobilization of the "little platoons" in the shape of (local) voluntary and faith-based associations in the service of neoliberal goals, and the evolution of invasive, neopaternalistic modes of intervention…(p. 390)

Thus, we can say that the emergence of voluntary organizations reflects the shifting priorities, and ideological imperatives, of neoliberal governance to most effectively and efficiently embed the concept of individualism as a social norm. In as much as public health

crises, and concerns over the social body, have become increasingly prevalent, the preferred (neoliberal inflected) modalities through which to intervene in such matters, concomitant to government retrenchment, has become public-private partnerships, individual philanthropy, and the voluntary sector (King, 2001, 2004). Stemming from the discursive and ideological project of the infamous "Believe" campaign (a strategically marketed PR project aimed at inculcating an attitude of individual responsibility and civic pride amidst a crumbling Baltimore infrastructure, see, Linder & Associates, 2002), this chapter provides a critical reading of such discursive structures as they appear within non-profits similar to, or loosely affiliated with, BMoreFit.

More specifically, I am concerned with the manner in which broadly defined discursive strategies of health responsibilization have "trickled down" from government agencies (in the form of public policy and various health initiatives), and been accepted, negotiated, and/or rejected at the level of everyday lived experience (in the form of programming and discourse within recreation centers, sport and fitness organizations, and a burgeoning voluntary sector concerned with the health and wellness of Baltimore's youth population). Investigating the role of philanthropy and voluntary sector efforts to address both health and youth—arguably representing two of the most prominent crises/concerns in the public imagination, fueled by national and local public discourse (Grossberg, 1992, 2005)—this chapter builds upon a discussion of Baltimore's shifting economic, political, and socio-spatial conditions in the post-industrializing, hyper-segregated urban metropolis before analyzing specific voluntary sector responses and outcomes, namely that of BMoreFit.

Empirical data used in the production of this chapter include (1) various textual sources including program flyers, websites, press releases, and other popular media (2) observations made during the course of conducting a survey study on behalf of the

BMoreFit organization where I visited recreation centers and other non-profits across Baltimore (3) personal communications in the form of interviews, emails, conversations, and ethnographic observations from my time working with BMoreFit. My purpose here was to examine how fitness and health was being discursively promoted by the voluntary sector within non-profit mission statements, programmatic initiatives, and from the mouths of those on the ground involved in the process of inciting and teaching Baltimore's youth to "BMoreFit" and healthy. In short, a contextual discursive analysis of several health and fitness minded organizations in Baltimore will be provided, followed by an introduction to the politics and programing of the BMoreFit organization as one of numerous, recently formed, non-profits that specifically target "at-risk" youth with the intention of improving their life chances (i.e., decreasing crime, obesity, health care costs, the crises of poor health and poverty) through health education and fitness training. First however, and in order to articulate the emergent formations of fitness philanthropy and the role of BMoreFit, some discussion of the socio-spatial context of neoliberal Baltimore is in order.

Context is everything: Post-Industrial Baltimore

Derisively labeled the 'Heroin capital', 'Murder capital' and a city of the "hopeless, depressed, unemployed and crack addicted" (Donovan, 2005; Linder & Associates, 2002), Baltimore's struggles with crime, violence, and drug addiction have appeared prominently in public discourse. National and local agencies have, at various times, reported that 24% of the city's residents live in poverty compared to 14% nationally (34% for children under 18), life expectancies are 14 years below the national average, per capita income is 57% of Maryland's average, and the city is regularly among the highest in rates of teen pregnancy, drug addiction (heroine, cocaine, meth-amphetamines), sexually transmitted diseases (HIV,

syphilis, gonorrhea), violent and property crime, drug-related emergency room visits, drug and gang related violence, and juvenile homicide (Dao, 2005; Harvey, 2000; Johns Hopkins Institute for Policy Studies, 2000; Kurson, 2002; Linder & Associates, 2002; US Census Bureau, 2004). It is no wonder that renowned cultural geographer David Harvey (2001) suggested that Baltimore is a city "emblematic of the processes that have molded cities under US capitalism, offering a laboratory sample of contemporary urbanism" (p. 7). Such statistics paint a grisly picture of post-industrial decay and the lingering aftershocks of 1980s "roll with it" neoliberalism (Keil, 2009). Amidst the decay of certain parts of the city and the commercial investment, gentrification, and revitalization of others, Baltimore, tellingly described as the "home of the comfortable and the prison of the choice-less" (Johns Hopkins Institute for Policy Studies, 2000, p. 48), faces a litany of socio-environmental health and safety issues and inequities that can be linked to the neoliberalization of the contemporary American city (Harvey, 2001, 2005; Silk, 2010). Ironically enough, in January 2006, Men's Fitness magazine dubbed Baltimore the, "Fittest City in America" based on a survey that, according to Silk & Andrews (2006), assessed,

> …ratios of parks to population; use of fitness facilities (such as gyms); diet patterns; reactions to public health emergencies such as obesity; and most important for Men's Fitness, the role of civic legislation and leadership in creating fitness-education and health-education directives, including requiring developers to build open-spaces and trails and in enacting fitness-promotion initiatives (p. 319).

While not based on any robust empirical research based methods, the proclamation, as with numerous other odes to Baltimore's efforts of neoliberal revitalization, extends further validity to the popular re-branding of Baltimore as a thriving entertainment, sport, and leisure tourist destination, and healthy place to live and work (Harvey, 2001; Silk & Andrews, 2006; Silk, 2010). Such discursive constructions serve to uphold spatial fantasies of safety, control, and order within highly segregated urban environments that have been materially

neglected by processes of retrenchment and disinvestment. In reality, the socio-spatial shifts, social policies, and priorities of governance within American cities have created, and continue to uphold, conspicuous spaces of privileged consumption and entertainment for some, and hidden spaces of contained squalor, desperation, and struggle for others (Harvey, 2001; Silk, 2004, 2010; Silk & Amis, 2005; Silk & Andrews, 2006).

Following the work of Harvey (1985, 1989, 2001), Castells (1983), and Barker, (2000), post-war changes incurred by inner cities was not an organic evolution but rather, the result of the spread of industrial capitalism in creating new markets, maintaining control of the workforce, and providing the means for capital accumulation by imposing policies on unionization, offering tax incentives, and maintaining low labor costs via state power. Such conditions of imposed order, and subordination of labor power by capital, epitomize what Marx defined as the theory of accumulation, and which, cannot be separated from class struggle due to capital's reliance on the domination of labor (Harvey, 1985). Given this catalyst of class polarization (and associated practices of racial and gender inequalities), the makeup of inner city residents has morphed dramatically with waves of overseas immigration, trans-continental migration, de-industrialization, and suburbanization. Referring to the latter and contributing to the first wave of white-flight out of the urban core, Barker (2000), notes that,

> The post-war expansion of suburbia was an outcome, at least in part, of tax relief given to home-owners and construction firms, the setting up of lending arrangements by banks/building societies, and the laying down of the transport, telecommunications and welfare infrastructure required for the suburbs to flourish (p. 299)

These shifts were also heavily racialized as discriminatory housing practices like redlining and blockbusting initiated de-facto segregation that privileged middle-income whites with opportunities for suburban home ownership that was denied to African Americans (Pietila,

2010). Changes in the global economy further exacerbated post-industrial shifts, marked by the movement of a significant portion of the manufacturing base overseas, a falling tax base due to upper and middle class suburban flight, and civil and racial strife due to the ravaging of the welfare state during capitalist restructuring in the 1980s and early 1990s (see Harvey, 2001; Allen, 1996). During this time of crisis, city governments sought out new methods to revitalize and rebuild the economy amidst the declining significance of manufacturing, transportation, and trade, which had sustained American cities throughout the industrial revolution.

Baltimore was one such city that had thrived from its manufacturing industries and location on the Chesapeake Bay as a prime east coast trading port. However, the recession of 1980-1983 saw the loss of thousands of jobs and closure of a majority of the cities' manufacturing and retail outlets, due to cheap overseas labor and increased competition from Japan, Western Europe and many early industrializing nations (Harvey, 2001). In a climate of rapidly advancing globalization, Baltimore's mayor William Donald Schaefer set out on a mission to re-imagine, re-create, and revitalize the economy and image of Baltimore by transforming the city into a tourist destination, focusing on sport, leisure, and entertainment industries to reverse the impacts of urban decline. Through the avaricious, and often disingenuous, image building campaigns of Mayor Schaefer and civic boosters, the global image of the city as premier site of tourist consumption began to abound in the media. In November of 1987, the UK's Sunday Times newspaper described the city as follows:

> Baltimore, despite soaring unemployment, boldly turned its derelict harbor into a playground. Tourists meant shopping, catering and transport; this in turn meant construction, distribution, manufacturing – leading to more jobs, more residents, more activity. The decay of old Baltimore slowed, halted, then turned back. The harbor area is now among America's top tourist

> draws and urban unemployment is falling fast (quoted in Harvey, 2001, p. 139)

This period of supposed economic growth in the 1980s focused primarily on the development of festival malls, events, retail outlets, and leisure spaces like the National Aquarium, Maryland Science Center, and Convention Center (see Harvey, 2001), which, in a post-industrializing context, were subject to the commercialized fantasies of urban renewal (Hannigan, 1998). Indeed, Schaefer began by commercializing the city fair, "adding all manner of ethnic festivals, concerts, and spectacular events" (Harvey, 2001, p. 138) to increase recognition of the city's renewal, and lure more visitors to the newly forming downtown leisure environment.

As part of the process in developing safe and sanitized consumption spaces, efforts of regeneration are often carried out through uneven public-private partnerships and coalitions of business and political leaders, which often leave city and state governments in a precarious position to incur a majority of the financial risk, while the private sector enjoys relatively risk-free profits (Silk & Amis, 2005). For example, the initial development phase of Baltimore's inner harbor "was 90 percent funded by the public treasury 'either in infrastructure, business subsidies, or loans/grants.' Yet the management of the project remained entirely in corporate hands" (Harvey, 2001, p. 141). At the discretion of such processes, the relinquishing of state and city power into the hands of corporate oligarchies has inevitably led to the further eroding of city services and public assistance (Harvey, 2001). For example, the annual $14 million subsidy for Oriole Park at Camden Yards is taken entirely from public funds in excess of taxes collected from employment related to the Orioles and Oriole Park (Friedman, Andrews, & Silk, 2004).

Furthermore, financing for Oriole Park came through the revenues dedicated to the Maryland Stadium Authority from scratch-off lottery tickets which, shown to be largely from

people of lower socioeconomic status, further denigrates the potential of minority youth since the money from the lotteries had functioned as financing for the city's public school system since the 1970's (Friedman et al., 2004). Amidst shrinking educational resources, rampant poverty, crime, and health figures rivaling some third world countries, "city services for the poor fell by an astounding 45 percent in real terms over the 1974-82 period" (Harvey, 2001, p. 140). Despite the cleverly disguised image of the city as a vibrant and thriving tourism based metropolis, the realities of city space and social conditions—taking the shape of dilapidated domiciles, rising poverty rates for African Americans, mass unemployment, record numbers of teen pregnancies, infant mortality, cancer rates, and crime (see Harvey, 2000, 2001; Silk & Andrews, 2006)—resembled more closely what Harvey (2001) referred to as "the rot beneath the glitter" (p. 140). The term (taken from the Baltimore 2000 report commissioned by the Goldseker Foundation) retains even greater relevance today, as several scholars have furthered Harvey's revealing analysis by highlighting the gentrifying use of monumental sport and leisure spaces as harbingers of global tourist differentiation amidst the deepening social and economic plight of local residents (see for example, Friedman et al., 2004; Silk, 2004, 2010; Silk & Amis, 2005; Silk & Andrews, 2006). Within these studies, the residual effects of socio-spatial reconfigurations by capital, brought about by the rapacious re-imaging and re-construction of tourist spaces, are shown to delineate a clear line of power and subordination, affluence and depravity, control and helplessness, between the spaces deemed "safe and sanitized" for tourist consumption, and those spaces of the "threatening native" which exist outside the tourist bubble (Friedman et al., 2004; Silk & Amis, 2005).

Do it yourself, Baltimore!: Neoliberalizing discourse and the "urban" Subject

While the processes of neoliberalism as an economic doctrine and political framework have exacerbated, and in some cases created, the debilitating material conditions of deindustrializing urban space and the inequitable outcomes it produces, the promulgation of neoliberalism as a cultural perspective normalizes such realities (Coakley, 2011). As Coakley (2011) suggests, "the resilience of neoliberalism depends on the integration of its ideas and beliefs in popular culture. The probability that a neoliberalization process will be sustained or revived in a society varies with the extent to which aspects of neoliberal ideology are uncritically accepted among citizens" (p. 72). Within a framework that alleviates the role of government and shifts responsibilities to the individual citizen, the proposed solutions to combat crime, drugs, violence, and unhealthy behaviors more broadly, is to secure private and voluntary sector support (corporations, public-private partnerships, non-profits, individual philanthropists) and the involvement of each individual citizen to "do their part." In such an environment, the basic necessities of human life—services, programs, and provisions that were once a public right—have been transferred to private institutions, which have little public accountability and cannot feasibly provide for the majority of the afflicted population (Judd & Simpson, 2003).

Stemming from the economic and moral philosophies of Reaganism, and drawing upon the works of Hall (1988) and Grossberg (1992) in their analyses of conservative hegemony, Howell and Ingham (2001) suggest that, "political policies and the economy do not capture the public imagination unless mapped into the imaginary of popular thought and discourse" (p. 330). In other words, it was within the affective mobilization of a 'language of lifestyle' through which social problems (disease, health care, unemployment, crime, drug abuse, etc.) were redefined as personal troubles and issues of personal character (see also,

Ingham, 1985). Budgetary crises, laissez faire economics, and a formidable New Right movement predicated this movement to responsibilize individual citizens through the discursive normalization of self-governance techniques (Rose, 1999). In other words, the language through which city governments and politicians have sought to alleviate, and thereby shift, the weight of responsibility for basic social protections over the past forty years, I argue, is a significant precursor to what could be called an entrenched and sizable non-profit voluntary sector in Baltimore (see discussion of OSI charities in Introduction, for example). In particular, the proliferation of "we" and "us" narratives through which, the powerful seek to determine and control how problems are defined, solutions are devised, and responsibility is assessed, has contributed to this process.

As a recent example, a speech given by Mayor Rawlings-Blake appeared in the Baltimore Sun in September 2013, highlighting her firm resolve in utilizing mega events like the recent Baltimore Grand Prix to generate positive (inter)national exposure and an economic impact estimated at "$130 million over three years" (Rawlings-Blake, 2013). In response to the so-called "naysayers," the Mayor suggested that,

> I have found that the harshest critics of ambitions like the Grand Prix are the same people who question whether Baltimore can ever do anything big. I just don't think like that. Baltimore cant afford to think like that…I do not believe in giving in to pessimism about our city when I see so clearly all of Baltimore's potential right in front of me. But in order to maximize that potential, *we* have to fight for it (Rawlings-Blake, 2013)

Throughout the address, the theme of individual responsibility becomes increasingly salient as the Mayor used collective language structures to attribute both successes and failures to the entire Baltimore community, the final point being that, "together, *we* can make the tough choices necessary to move Baltimore forward" (Rawlings-Blake, 2013). However, this kind of rhetorical strategizing has been deployed so often that it no longer seems

extraordinary or out of place, thereby setting the stage for the cultural ingratiation of neoliberalism as an unquestioned philosophy of urban governance (Coakley, 2011).

Specifically within Baltimore, a key moment in this quite blatant "responsibilization" of everyday life and the shifting of social problems to the hands of the individual citizen came in this very form: a strategic attempt to alter the thinking of the public through the cleverly designed and aggressively promoted language of individual belief, namely, the aptly coined Baltimore *Believe* campaign. In short, this public relations effort entailed the plastering of *Believe* stickers across the city landscape, large banners hanging from buildings, and television advertisements depicting the pestilence of drugs and the necessity of every citizen to do their part in the alleviation of these social issues. In particular, the campaign espoused that:

> We believe in the people of Baltimore.
> We believe Baltimore can recover from the pestilence of illegal drugs.
> We believe the people of Baltimore will now *activate in themselves* the power to redeem the core identity of the city as the best place in America to live, work, and raise a family.
> We believe in the future of Baltimore (Baltimore *Believe*, 2003, *emphasis added*)

Amidst a rapidly changing global economy, and the ever-looming threat of budgetary crisis, the shifting emphasis on minimizing the role of government has been frequent, and seemingly ubiquitous, across major metropolitan areas in the US and other developed countries. Indeed, the attitude of governance, reflected through public relations campaigns like this one, has been to instill a mindset of self sufficiency and individual responsibility which, in theory, would enable government to fulfill its primary neoliberalizing purpose with regard to defending and bolstering the free market (Rose, 1999). For example, shortly after Mayor Martin O'Malley took office in 1999, he made the direction and focus of his administration impeccably clear:

> Not too long ago, big city mayors had to spend a great deal of time being social workers; now mayors also have to be entrepreneurs . . . a mayor's job has changed from generating government-run programs for every problem, to *producing deals* and partnerships that deliver measurable improvements (O'Malley, 2001, emphasis added)

Within the new realm of entrepreneurial governance, the regeneration and reimaging of the city required corporate support and investment, new strategies for policing and enforcement, and further distancing from the welfarist, social provisions of previous generations (Harvey, 2001; Silk, 2004, 2010). As a symbolic effort to bring about systemic social change in Baltimore, the *Believe* campaign sought to change popular perceptions of the city as drug addicted and crime ridden, get citizens to believe that things could change, and that they themselves could get involved in efforts to clean up the city. Amidst a controversial television ad promoting the Believe campaign (depicting a young girl shot to death in the street, strung out heroin addicts, gangbangers, boarded up row houses, and so forth), and the plastering of "Believe" stickers across the city landscape (Silk, 2010), Mayor O'Malley further described the administration's efforts in getting residents to "buy-in" to the campaign:

> The *Believe* campaign is about getting everyone involved. Homicides, addiction, violence, its all much *bigger than just government. Everyone must act.* We're making progress. I just got the number: Baltimore is leading America in the rate of reduction of drug-related emergency-room admissions. We're not the heroin capital anymore. *We need mentors, we need people to believe.* People need to know they're not alone (O'Malley, in Kurson, 2002, *emphasis added*)

Despite the appeals to get everyone involved in rectifying the social ills plaguing the city—even going so far as to acknowledge the inability of city government to tackle such problems on their own—the *Believe* campaign reflects the normalization of a neoliberal "thought virus" (Beck, 2000, p. 422), wherein, the actual message is that the city will no longer take responsibility to address such issues unless they interfere with their primary objective: preserving a vibrant and conducive environment for free market capitalism. Subsequently, the abdication of government responsibility for the public good has been placed squarely

upon the shoulders of Baltimore residents to "do their part" and, even further, to find out what they can do by calling 1-866-Believe. However, demonstrating the need for public institutions that provide services, access, and opportunity for all citizens regardless of income or social position, the privatization of something like crime prevention has proven to be terribly flawed.

Denoting the tragic realities of Baltimore's shifting civic emphasis, and its significant problems with witness intimidation, the deaths of Angela and Carnell Dawson and their 5 children stand as a testament to the problems of a shrinking and increasingly powerless government, and "inadequate municipal services and amenities, including police and fire protection" (Williams & Collins, 2001, p. 410). Following the call to "Believe", the Dawson's had stepped forward to work with police in Oliver, North East Baltimore, calling more than 50 times between July to October 2002. Following several incidents of intimidation by local drug dealers, their house was broken into and set on fire killing Angela, Carnell, and their 5 children, 9-year-old twins Keith and Kevin, Carnell Jr., 10, Juan Ortiz, 12, and LaWanda Ortiz, 14. Relatives of the Dawson family filed suit against the city, state, and various agencies, claiming that more should have been done to prevent the tragedy (Hurley, 2005). Following the late Johnnie Cochran's 2003 litigation memo that cited a disconnect between the Believe campaign and its failure to act on behalf of the Dawson family, they sought $14 million in damages (Hurley, 2005). The suit alleged that the *Believe* campaign, which encouraged residents to come forward with information about drug dealers, only served to contribute to the problem because law enforcement did not provide resources to protect witnesses, and it was launched at a time when it was known that witness intimidation was rampant. The suit also critiqued the administration for a focus on a high-priced *symbolic campaign* at the expense of witness protection provision (Hurley, 2005).

In true neoliberal fashion, the horrific Dawson family tragedy not only demonstrates the willingness of city officials to accept the risks, and embodied "collateral damage" of their retrenchment agendas—where the localized calamities of structurally influenced social problems like witness intimidation become discursively constructed as private troubles and the result of poor lifestyle behaviors—but that, within poor communities of color, the marginalization, exclusion, and carceralization of such spaces, and indeed, the bodies therein, reflects the ideological belief that they in fact, *do not matter* (Giroux, 2006). Or, as Giroux & Giroux (2008, p. 185) suggest, as the state becomes more closely aligned with capital,

> …politics is defined largely by its policing functions rather than as an agency for peace and social reform. As the state abandons its social investments in health, education, and the public welfare, it increasingly takes on the functions of an enhanced security or police state, the signs of which are most visible in the increasing use of the state apparatus to spy on and arrest its subjects, the incarceration of individuals considered disposable (primarily poor people of color), and the ongoing criminalization of social policies

Amidst the conditions of post-industrial decay and disinvestment, Baltimore pursued its revitalization efforts through the mobilization of neoliberal policies and rhetoric, which served to operationalize the enhanced control and regulation of city space for market growth and securitized consumption. However, in vying to attract investors and consumers in a highly competitive global market, Baltimore's entrepreneurial makeover masks the "rot beneath the glitter" (Harvey, 2001, p. 140); an outer façade of market success, vibrancy, and affluence, shielding the deepening socioeconomic and socio-spatial polarities that have negatively impacted local city residents (MacLeod, Raco, & Ward, 2003; Rose, 2000). While Chicago school free market ideologues ardently proclaimed that a self-regulating free market system would be the most efficient provider of social needs, it has actually engendered a draconian intensification of discipline, control, and manipulation through the synthesis of state intervention and market rule (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Klein, 2008; MacLeod,

2002). As Klein (2008) further suggests, the eroded distinction between the private sphere and public good has resulted in a sweeping marketization of government, and responsibilities of the state; a hollow government in which essential services are increasingly outsourced to private contractors, or left up to the inconsistencies of the voluntary sector (Giroux, 2006).

Within this system, Peck & Tickell (2002) suggest that neoliberalism, due to the imperatives of individual participation in the dictates of free market consumerism, has become increasingly concerned with "the political foregrounding of new modes of 'social' and penal policy making, concerned specifically with the aggressive regulation, disciplining, and containment of those marginalized or dispossessed by the neo-liberalization of the 1980s" (p. 389). Indeed, as Giroux (2006) suggests, the logics of modernization, militarization, and neoliberalism have promoted a 'politics of disposability' wherein bodies that don't matter—those impeded by, or incapable of contributing to, the consumer capitalist order, namely bodies that are black, brown, sick, poor, disabled, elderly, or young—can be relegated to the margins of society.

To efficiently ward off the threatening 'native' from revitalized spaces of tourist consumption then (Fainstein & Gladstone, 1999; Harvey, 2001; Jamieson, 2004; Lash & Urry, 1994), new strategies of surveillance, policing, and social control have been implemented to maintain the socio-spatial boundaries of the haves and the have-nots (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Giroux, 2004; 2006). The approval and mobilization of such modes of enforcement deny the existence of structural inequities, and attempt to rectify the conditions of post-industrial decay, through the forceful carceralization of urban populations, perceived as being "disruptively present, defined as redundant, pathological, and dangerous" (Giroux, 2006, p. 22). Within the US context, such individuals are relegated to the fringes of the global economic and political framework, occupying a status of the

"living dead" in Achille Mbembe's terms (2003), personifications of the death of the social contract; made invisible and irrelevant except when paraded as examples of individual failure. In Mbembe's theory of necropolitics, life is subjugated to the power of death; a sovereign power can invoke a state of exception, suspend the law and sanction the right to displace, punish, imprison, and even murder, the dispossessed or the defiant (see also, Giroux, 2006). History shows us that in an American context, such activities have occurred quite frequently, all in the name of protecting American (market) freedoms (consider, for example, the assassination of civil rights leaders and anti-war demonstrators, rampant police brutality aimed at oppressed groups and protestors, the federally sanctioned terrorizing of Black communitarian organizations, and the imprisonment of activists like Mumia Abu Jamal, and the Move9, just to name a few).

As a city reflective of America, Baltimore is likewise deeply saturated in such relations of power through which city space, and those within it, are regulated, controlled, and governed by the logics and dictates of both the market's *invisible hand*, and the quite blatant *visible hand(s)* of law enforcement, private security forces, judiciaries, politicians, and urban planners; the outcomes of such being particularly catastrophic for poor youth of color (Giroux, 2003, 2004, 2009; Rose, 1996, 1999). For a city starkly divided by the co-articulations of class, race, and ethnic background, the move to shift responsibility for the public good into the hands of individual citizens carries an intensely contradictory and abusive potential to further polarize communities and individual citizens along such cleavages (MacLeod, 2002).

From neoliberalism to healthism

Extending from this context of shifting politico-economic priorities, urban restructuring, and the dismantling of the social contract, the health of urban populations has become a significant public concern, particularly due to the popular perception that it is the poor who are costing the state, and thus individual taxpayers, "billions in healthcare costs that could have been prevented" (Field notes, June 2010 – noted while overhearing two BMoreFit faculty members discuss health statistics in Baltimore). As such, it is the manner in which individual philanthropists, public-private partnerships, and non-profit organizations, like BMoreFit, have responded to such conditions and enacted targeted interventions that is problematic. The realization of a healthy body politic becomes a site of contestation in as much as fitness, nutrition, and health are reinforced through public pedagogies of individualism, personal responsibility, and self-improvement, while simultaneously serving as justification for self-governance, and retrenchment of social services. This is where the slipperiness of neoliberalism as a cultural perspective becomes imbued with tremendous power and influence (Coakley, 2011), and where it extends into relatively new social fields, namely those pertaining to the body, health, and philosophies guiding personal action, which have been generally described as healthism.

As Crawford (1980) originally conceived it, healthism refers to a system of beliefs that position activities promoting good health (regular exercise, choosing healthy foods, avoiding unhealthy 'lifestyle' behaviors, like smoking, for example, etc.) as a moral obligation of the individual subject (Crawford, 1984; Lupton, 1995). The entire landscape of health and fitness knowledge (from medical doctors to celebrity fitness trainers) and the actions required for the realization of "good health" (i.e., exercise and "proper" diet) already lend itself to a very simple, visceral form of logic: if you want to live longer, healthier, and

happier, you have to take it upon yourself to do something about it, nobody can do it for you. Quite simply, this is the imperative of healthism: to incite subjects to take responsibility for their own health, and become entrepreneurial agents that govern themselves, and their bodies, in a manner deemed "appropriate," in order to reach, maintain, and reproduce the dominant standards of health, as measured on and through the body (Briggs & Hallin, 2007; Fusco, 2006, 2007). However, the imperative of healthism is based entirely upon the premise that we are *all* free subjects that can simply choose whether or not to practice healthy behaviors, discipline our bodies, and practice forms of self-surveillance according to the dominant discourses promoting this system of belief (Bunton, 1997; Lupton, 1995). As Greco (1993) notes, a "health that can be chosen" rather than a "health one simply enjoys or misses" signals the movement of individual health away from its contextualization within the limits of society, environment, heredity, or circumstance, and positions the neoliberal subject as a free and rational agent solely responsible for demonstrating proper choices with regard to his or her own body. The body then becomes a symbol that denotes whether or not an individual has accepted responsibility for the "proper" care and maintenance of the body and its physical health, and for communicating the moral health and social status of the individual as a rational and free acting agent (Greco, 1993; Lupton, 1995; White, Young, & Gillett, 1995).

The process of exhorting citizens to become entrepreneurial subjects who accept and reproduce the varied machinations of self-discipline and surveillance inherent to the logic of healthism, can be understood through the writings of Michel Foucault. Specifically, it is Foucault's (1977, 1980) conceptualizations of disciplinary power—the manner in which threats of violence or force have given way to more subtle means of governance, regulation, and surveillance that construct norms against which individual subjects are urged to self-

regulate, self-discipline, and conform—that have heavily influenced critiques of healthism as it appears in media discourse, medical professions, fitness and leisure, and popular culture in general (Briggs & Hallin, 2007; Cheek, 2008; Deveaux, 1996; Duncan, 1994; Roy, 2008). While a fit body in contemporary western society communicates any number of positive moral judgments constructed in opposition to those of an unfit body, it is the regulatory techniques of a "normalizing gaze, a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, to classify and to punish. It establishes over individuals a visibility through which one differentiates and judges them" (Foucault, 1977, p. 184). It is this inescapable visibility of the body (its size, shape, tone, and aesthetic appearance), combined with the discursively produced normalizations of the health and culture industries, that renders it prone to constant disciplinary surveillance.

Rose (1996) suggests that through the prescriptive machinations of a biopolitics of everyday life, "it has become possible to actualize [the] notion of the actively responsible individual because of the development of new apparatuses that integrate subjects into a moral nexus of identifications and allegiances in the very processes in which they appear to act out their most personal choices" (p. 57-58). As such, it is the process of "biocommunicability" that has enabled neoliberal-healthist ideologies to become mapped onto the imaginary of individual subjects, and to take actionable shape within new techniques of governance (Briggs & Hallin, 2007; Rose, 1996). In the sense that, "individuals structure schemes of self-surveillance and self-control, in part, by interpellating themselves vis-à-vis categories, subjectivities, and discursive relations" (Briggs & Hallin, 2007, p. 46) that are constructed by culture industries, the processes of biocommunicability inevitably produce polarizations that reflect already existing inequities within the social hierarchy. On a much smaller scale, yet viewed here as a microcosm of such broader forces,

it is my contention that organizations like BMoreFit not only espouse the rhetoric and ideological underpinnings of healthism to define their purpose, but that they actively communicate such ideals, directly and indirectly, to their targeted subjects in order to also interpellate them into this system of self-governing responsibilization.

Mapping the discourses of fitness philanthropy

Having discussed broadly the socio-spatial contexts of metropolitan Baltimore, it is my specific intention to analyze dominant health and fitness discourses driving voluntary sector efforts. Such organizations are fuelled by particular agendas (whether influenced by public policy or various governmental initiatives and partnerships, or the ambitions and ideals of individual concerned citizens) and seek to intervene in ways deemed most appropriate and/or effective through a complex web of networks, social exchanges, and popular knowledge concerning health, fitness, and the body. To further complicate this site of empirical analysis, the organizations I am most concerned with are those specifically addressing youth and the potential pathologies often associated with, and/or attributed to, young people living in urban environments (i.e., crime, drug abuse, educational failure, welfare dependency, poor health, etc.). While the organizations discussed herein do not all stake a specific and exclusive claim on the helping of young people, the discourses emanating from them suggest a strong connection between preventive health and individual responsibility, and the importance of communicating these ideas at an early age through various educational initiatives. As such, it is necessary to consider how the voluntary sector is playing a role in distributing the dominant discourses of health and fitness, particularly in terms of inculcating youth with messages of responsibility, prevention, and "proper" lifestyle.

The remainder of this chapter circumscribes a select group of non-profit organizations (similar to BMoreFit) and examines how, and to what extent, discourses of responsibility operate within their stated purpose, goals, and promotional directives. While some strands of research in critical public health have examined discourses of responsibility within various forms of popular and news media (see, for example, Briggs & Hallin, 2007; Cheek, 2008; Roy, 2008), this chapter focuses on the expression of similar philosophies, namely healthism and responsibilization, within the mediated promotions and descriptive texts that underpin the organizations themselves, and their stated purpose. The following non-profit organizations were selected for the purposes of discourse analysis for several reasons, including, but not limited to:

1. The degree to which the Director of my primary empirical site (BMoreFit) often spoke favorably about these organizations, their potential impact on the health and fitness of Baltimore citizens, and his desire to establish working partnerships with them, if they did not already exist.
2. The relative ease of access to program mission statements, goals, and other publications outlining the imperatives and underlying philosophies of the organization.
3. The relevance of the organization to BMoreFit, and similarities in terms of targeted populations, modalities for achieving goals, and overall organizational structure.

Identified organizations for discourse analysis

1. **Coalition for a Healthy Maryland** – The coalition is a non-profit conglomerate comprised of over 100 Associations/Organizations, such as Girls on the Run of Central

Maryland, the Junior League of Baltimore, and Black Youth in Action, to name a few. The coalition also counts among its members, over 30 medical/fitness related companies, 25 major health clubs, and several hundred individual citizens, all pledging their support for the organization, its mission, and its political philosophy, which is specifically, to promote health prevention, propose and pass legislation to establish tax incentives for healthy behaviors, and educate the public about the ramifications of a sedentary lifestyle and the costs to the healthcare system and Maryland's economy (see, http://www.cfahm.org/index/take-action).

2. **Y of Central Maryland –** With a main office located in Druid Hill Park in Baltimore, the Y of central Maryland is described on their website as "a charitable organization dedicated to developing the full potential of every individual through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all" (see, http://ymaryland.org/default.aspx).

3. **Baltimore Livehealthy, Inc. -** A non-profit organization dedicated to educating the citizens of Baltimore about the importance of good nutrition, regular exercise and preventive health screenings so that they might lead healthier, longer lives and embrace overall wellness as a goal. The organization, partnered with numerous national and local sponsors, hosts a series of events during the first week of October each year where local citizens can receive free health screenings, participate in interactive sessions about health and physical activity, and learn about nutrition. On their website, it is suggested that, "with increased education, awareness and practice, we believe that Baltimore City residents can improve their health outcomes and our city can become a healthier, happier, more productive place to live, work and play" (see, http://www.healthycitydays.com).

4. **Back On My Feet** – According to the main website, Back on My Feet (BoMF) is a national for-purpose 501(c)3 organization that uses running to help those experiencing homelessness change the way they see themselves so they can make real change in their lives that results in employment and independent living. The organization's mission is not to create runners within the homeless population, but to use running to create self-sufficiency in the lives of those experiencing homelessness. The program's success is measured by how many Members achieve independence through employment and housing. BoMF currently has chapters operating in **Baltimore**, Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Washington D.C., Indianapolis, New York City, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles (see, http://baltimore.backonmyfeet.org).

5. **The HEAL Baltimore Project** – A network of health care practitioners working to address the need for greater accessibility to holistic health care and preventative wellness resources in Baltimore. Members advocate a holistic approach to health care by providing information on their website about where to find affordable, non-discriminatory "whole" health care providers that can assist populations normally excluded from such services (discontinued in 2012 and website removed).

6. **BMoreFit** – A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that, when started in 2008, initially recruited small groups of "at-risk" young adults and, working with grant money awarded from George Soros' Open Society Institute (OSI), paid a modest wage to "student" participants to learn about fitness and health and train to become YMCA certified group fitness instructors that would also enable them to become "fitness ambassadors" for their own communities. In 2011, the Board of Directors changed the programmatic focus of the

organization to develop a BMoreFit teacher toolkit whereby grade school teachers in select local Baltimore schools would implement physical activity time in the classroom (see, http://www.bmorefit.org).

Themes of voluntary discourse

After selecting the organizations to be analyzed, and collecting empirical sources, a series of interpretive textual "readings" (McDonald & Birrell, 1999) were performed following the radically contextual, theory-method of articulation, outlined in the methodology chapter (See Appendix; see also, for example, Slack, 1996). While I did not take a decidedly post-structuralist position on the interpretation of social phenomena and material reality in this study (being primarily informed through the ethnographic processes of direct participatory engagement, observation, and interviewing), it is important to consider the ways in which language or text (re)produces hierarchies of power and how individuals negotiate their own identities, experiences, and understandings in relation to broader discursive forces. In other words, discourse analysis enables the synergy of multiple perspectives that, according to Kincheloe (2001), moves the ethnographer-as-bricoleur "towards a deeper level of analysis as he or she see's 'what's not there' in physical presence, what is not discernible by the ethnographic eye" (p. 686). Thus, discourse analysis encompassed one aspect of my contingent methodological approach (King, 2005) that sought to be "multiperspectival" (Kellner, 1997), and radically contextualist in analyzing and interpreting the relationships between discourse, materiality, and lived experience (Frow & Morris, 2003).

Over the course of 8 months, collecting and analyzing media sources, four key themes were identified from program websites, mission statements, and other publications

(not to mention personal communications with individuals representing the aforementioned organizations). Each theme was identified as a dominant trope emerging from voluntary organizations specifically within the context of Baltimore, but, it could be surmised, are also reflective of a number of major metropolitan areas, and their health promotion activities, across the USA:

1. *Inciting personal responsibility through fear*
2. *The moralization of health: Fatness as personal failure*
3. *Preventive health, fiscal crisis, and civic responsibility*
4. *A new language of Healthism: Self-empowerment and the private body*

While these themes emerged organically from the process of reading, interpreting, and thinking through, the contextual meanings of non-profit discourses in relation to my stated theoretical frameworks, they are used here for the purposes of organizational coherency and not to denote a totality and/or finality of discursive meaning. Rather, each theme encompasses various sub-themes, and there are inevitable similarities within and between them all.

Inciting personal responsibility through fear

A key tactic in the responsibilization of health emerges through the dissemination of discourses that illustrate the consequences of failing to act on commonly prescribed health and fitness measures. According to recent physical activity guidelines released by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and corroborated by those of the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) and the American Heart Association (AHA), adults should engage in 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity five days a week (see, for example, http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG). While it is suggested that such

requirements represent a baseline minimum for sedentary individuals to improve their overall health and cardiovascular fitness, expanded health gains such as weight loss or weight maintenance may require longer and/or more intense durations of physical activity.

According to William Haskell, the lead author of the ACSM/AHA guidelines, these recommendations for physical activity "have long been based on research demonstrating that even relatively moderate amounts of physical activity will have positive benefits on health…especially for people who are inactive…health and physical activity are closely linked" (see ACSM, 2014 at http://www.acsm.org/about-acsm/media-room/acsm-in-the-news/2011/08/01/acsm-aha-support-federal-physical-activity-guidelines). With the establishment and promulgation of such guidelines, the failure of individual subjects to acknowledge and act upon them is often cited as the primary, and most salient, causality for a range of "preventable" health problems. Often referred to as "lifestyle" choices or behavioral factors contributing to ill health, such discourses make explicit the frightening reality of mortality, disease, and debilitating physical conditions that, with reference to health and physical activity guidelines, contribute to a broadly accepted logic that is meant to:

1). Unsettle the individual subject with the fear of experiencing such realities personally if they fail to act in accordance with established exercise and diet prescriptions.

2). Urge the public's acceptance for an entrepreneurial subject position with respect to health and fitness, which also entails the individual subject's willing participation in the free market to secure health promoting products and services.

3.) (Re)produce the visceral logic of embodied personal responsibility in such a way that, for those who are sick, diseased, addicted, overweight, and obese, their troubles

are constituted and defined as personal failures, unrelated to any form of social determinants.

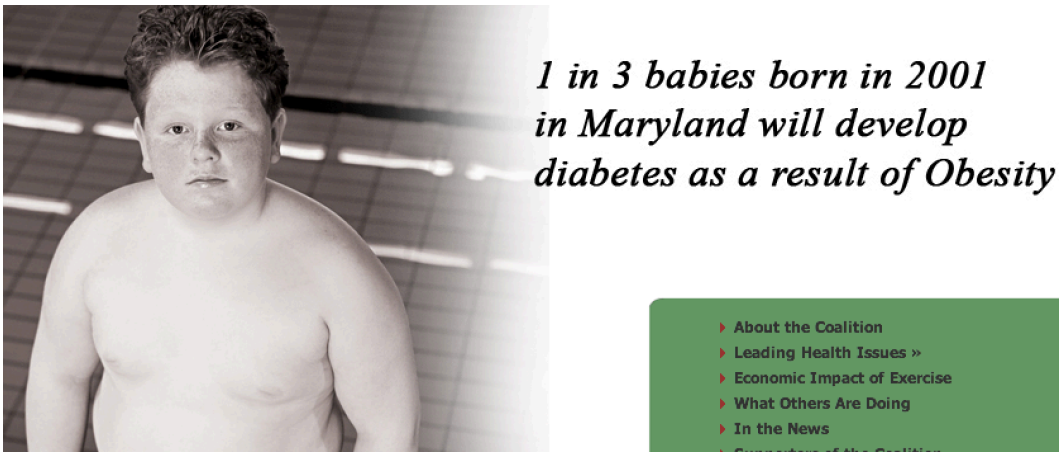
Through the juxtaposition of health warnings and statistics with images of diseased, sick, or unhealthy bodies, the public is constantly reminded of their obligation to act in accordance with the prescribed recommendations for a healthy lifestyle or else they will face the sort of consequences being depicted by those who, it must be assumed, did not heed official warnings. For example, the Coalition for a Healthy Maryland is representative of a large cohort of commercial entities, non-profits, and individual citizens supporting health advocacy through various forms of media promotion. On their website, the stated purpose of the Coalition is "to promote prevention…The *real* answer to the obesity epidemic and spiraling health care costs. We plan to assemble, propose and pass legislation establishing a tax incentive to Marylanders for behavior changes and expenditures that lead to a healthy lifestyle" (see http://www.cfahm.org/index/about, *emphasis added*). Along with a sizable and growing contingent of healthcare providers, researchers, and practitioners of health and fitness espousing the personal responsibility mantra, there is a concerted effort to promote preventive health measures to combat poor health outcomes, and the rising costs of treating what has been defined as 'preventable' and 'lifestyle-related' diseases and illnesses (Howell & Ingham, 2001).

While the basic idea of preventive health is laudable in terms of helping citizens avoid debilitating conditions in the first place, its contemporary 'hands-off' manifestation within a system of roll-with-it neoliberalization (Peck & Tickell, 2002), appears to be more concerned with furthering the acceptance and normalization of personal responsibility for health (a 'do it yourself' approach) that alleviates concern for structural impediments. Rather than providing support networks, a built environment that inspires one to be healthy, and

resources for health prevention that encourage healthy behaviors to begin with (a 'lets do it together' approach), the discursive promotion of health responsibilization ahistorically denies systems of inequity and structural barriers to well-being (Galvin, 2002; Howell & Ingham, 2001; Ingham, 1985; Roy, 2008). Through scare tactics and finger wagging, the "unfit", "unhealthy", "poor", or "at-risk" are often blamed for their existential condition and further stigmatized as being primarily responsible for the rising costs of US healthcare. Unsurprisingly then, health prevention initiatives have become more synonymous with health responsibilization tactics, employing a discursive vocabulary articulating individual fitness with morality and citizenship that provides justification for such vitriol (Briggs & Hallin, 2007; McDermott, 2007; Roy, 2008).

In this way, bodies deemed to be unhealthy are subject to scrutiny, rebuke, and condemnation for their perceived failure to participate in what has become a market-driven enterprise for health and fitness. If an individual gets sick or injured (particularly those unable to participate in all the latest modalities of private, commercialized fitness and health), it has become easier, and more commonplace, to blame the individual subject for making poor choices, and contributing to their own condition, rather than acknowledging the impact of socio-environmental factors, infrastructural inadequacies, or even hereditary conditions. The ill, diseased, overweight, and obese are thereby made to accept greater financial and social responsibility for their state of being and are more easily dismissed as moral failures who, in light of this ideology, are often defined as the deserving recipients of any negative health outcomes they encounter. Such a stance on preventive health and the moral responsibility of the individual can be seen within some of the health promotions emerging from the Coalition for a Healthy Maryland.

The Coalition's latest public relations advertisements juxtapose images of people from a range of body types (from fit to fat, young and old, male and female) with health statistics, physical activity recommendations, and responsibilizing tropes. While the advertisements appear to cite credible health statistics and health promotion guidelines, the decision to depict certain bodies, in certain places, and accompanying particular messages about health, is certainly strategic, and intended to incite specific, health and fitness oriented behaviors amongst targeted groups. For example, one advertisement depicts a portly young boy about 10 years old, standing next to an empty pool with his shirt off. He is staring directly into the camera at an upward angle with an impassive look on his face (the intention perhaps being to simulate how a child might look up at a parent or adult authority figure). The caption reads, "*1 in 3 babies born in 2001 in Maryland will develop diabetes as a result of obesity*." Given the boy's young age, his clearly visible corporeal opulence, and the way he is positioned to stare directly into the camera, the viewer is urged to feel troubled by the suggestion that 33% of babies born will develop diabetes due to obesity. As an embodied representation of this message of prevention, the insinuation is that this boy's condition could have been avoided by the watchful care of responsible parents that are themselves engaged in healthy behaviors. The boy appears to be alone near the calm waters of an empty pool, which could signify the lack of parental involvement and responsibility in correcting the perceived excesses that have supposedly contributed to his overweight body (often linked to poor diet, lack of exercise, too much TV and/or video games, laziness, etc.).



Unlike other advertisements that avoid showing the faces of overweight or obese adults, this child's face, along with his naked upper torso, are visible focal points, which enable a personalized moralization of health on the part of the viewer. Not only is there the suggestion of financial and personal health costs (obesity and diabetes), but perhaps more importantly in terms of such ads functioning as a call to action, there are the perceived social costs read from the stereotypical imagery of a lonely, "out of shape" kid at the pool, left to incur the judgments and potential harassment of his peers. In this way, parents are urged to do all they can to help their children avoid the undesirable realities of childhood obesity, or else their child could look like the one depicted.

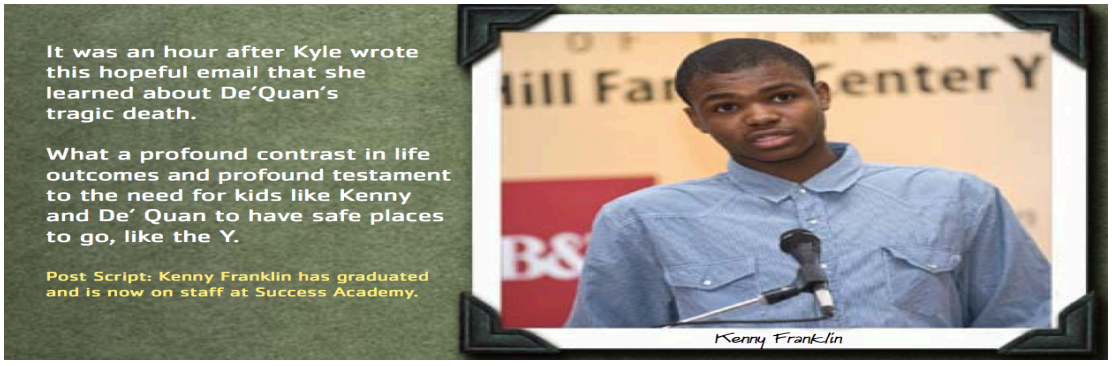
Given all the heightened concern over, and preoccupation with, the state of youth in America, the fearful panic and anxieties over health are doubly compounded, and carry significantly powerful and persuasive meanings, when juxtaposed with young people who are already, and often, the targets of neoliberal interventionist policies and individualizing pedagogical programming (Giroux, 2004, 2009). In this way, the logics of healthism become further inscribed onto the consciousness of parents and adults who are urged to view the problems of today's youth as intricately connected to problems of the body, its health, appearance, behavior, and social value. For many parents then, particularly those amongst

what Pierre Bourdieu (1984) called the aspirant middle class (focused on the social presentation of status and advancement), the fear of their children failing to invest in and exhibit an "appropriate" bodily physique is an enormously powerful social idea that aids in the reinforcement of responsibilizing pedagogical approaches to combating childhood obesity.

Moreover, if there is a general fearfulness concerning the state of youth in any generation, as a projected reflection of an impending yet uncertain future (Grossberg, 2005), there is also a concomitant, and perhaps more visceral, fear of death, dying, and the uncertainty of life itself. With regard to the health and longevity of the physical body then, discourses of responsibility are particularly bolstered when lifestyle behaviors are connected to statistics of mortality. In yet another ad from the Coalition, three women (two middle age and one elderly) are pictured lying on their stomachs performing a yoga stretch in what appears to be a health club or yoga studio. The caption reads: "*7 out of 10 leading causes of death are lifestyle related*." While extremely vague in terms of what the leading causes of death actually are, and how they are connected to heath and fitness practices like yoga, the image suggests that people can live longer by participating in various forms of physical activity, like yoga. Furthermore, the advertisement reinforces the legitimacy of the 'lifestyle' concept in such a way that the public is constantly made to think about death, dying, and its causes as being the outcome of personal 'lifestyle-related' decisions, and not anyway connected to broader public concerns like high unemployment, poverty, lack of health care, access to fresh healthy foods, and access to public recreation or safe spaces for physical activity (Howell & Ingham, 2001).

While less explicit in their promotion of particular lifestyle behaviors than the Coalition, the Y of Central Maryland has also produced promotional texts that highlight the

importance of fitness and health as the modality through which to prevent early mortality, disease, or sickness. In particular, and because they also share a vested interest in Baltimore's young people, some publications have focused on demonstrating how participation in Y activities can "save lives" and enrich the potential of youth. Specifically, the 2010 annual report devoted a two-page story that first, briefly noted the tragic death of De'Quan Burks who was shot to death on Halloween night (depicted in the article as an example of De'Quan's *poor choice* to be hanging out in the streets rather than at the Y on that fateful night), followed by the deliberate contrast of this incident to the success story of his peer Kenny Franklin (both students in the Y's 'Success Academy for "at-risk" youth) who, rather than "hang out in the streets" *chose* to spend his time at the Y. The article states very matter-of-factly that, "De'Quan deserved to be safe in his neighborhood. Sadly, safety is simply not something that can be taken for granted. *It must be planned for and deliberately created by responsible adults.*" (Y of Central MD Annual Report, 2010). The majority of the article then goes on to discuss how "troubled kids need not turn into tragic statistics" and that they need a place to go to "assure they are productively re-engaged" through the programs offered at the Y.



Amidst several other stories highlighting the personal success stories of individuals overcoming various "lifestyle" challenges (drug addiction, homelessness, violence, domestic abuse, etc.) through their engagement with Y programming, readers are urged to avoid the

social and physical costs of such 'behaviors' by seeking out, and participating in, activities of self-betterment. While taking on various iterations, it is this basic logic that extends into much of the promotional material emanating from the Y as well as Back on My Feet, BMoreFit, and Baltimore LiveHealthy. In short, if one is to avoid a "preventable" death, she or he must seek out and engage in healthy behaviors that have been "scientifically proven" to enhance health and quality of life. The inevitability of death, and the inability of agents to actually retain complete control over their life chances, is obscured through such discourses. Instead, the private body is depicted as an extension of one's own lifestyle project, and the outcome of individual choice (Howell & Ingham, 2001). Thus, for those failing to work towards, and consciously pursue, Western standards of beauty, or the idealized, fit, toned, and muscular, corporeal form promulgated by popular fitness media, they often come to represent abject bodies that, in contradistinction to markers of "good" health, are dehumanized by the evaluative gaze, which assumes that their perceived inaction, and health outcomes, are directly related to "poor lifestyle choices," and not in any way linked to social and environmental determinants.

The moralization of health: Fatness as personal failure

> The language of medicine turns fatness into a pathology, obesity into an epidemic, and fat people into social and moral deviants who are seen as literally embodying their failings…The "good citizen" (e.g., the moral individual), heeds these imperatives and fulfills her—since fat is so often identified with women—responsibilities to the community by relentless self-surveillance. To the extent that men are fat, they are feminized (Duncan, 2008, p. 3).

To be clear, the fear of becoming fat, obese, or the fear of allowing one's children to become such, is inherently tied to the sociocultural problem of obesity, and not the actual biomedical problem of obesity (Duncan, 2008; Sykes, 2008). Previous concerns within the

biomedical community over cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and hypertension, for example, representing health outcomes highly correlated to excess body fat, have largely been refashioned within discourses that construct a moral panic around the ubiquitous topic of the "obesity epidemic" (Cheek, 2008; Roy, 2008; Sykes & McPhail, 2008). As Jutel (2005) notes, the World Health Organization (WHO) defines obesity as "an epidemic of international proportions, and overweight is now identified as a disease entity rather than a statistical observation" (p. 114). Subsequently, there has been an epistemological shift with regard to how bodies are socially constructed, and how they are judged and evaluated, through the circuits of popular culture and medical authority (Rose, 1996; Murray, 2005).

Within a context of shifting priorities for social welfare, increasing modalities of (self) surveillance, and the promulgation of an entrepreneurial subject position with respect to fitness and health, dominant medical, health, and fitness discourses reinforce and incite "moral panics" that produce a "kind of exaggerated, collective response to the behavior of a particular group, prompting moral indignation, anxiety, and often, hostility (Duncan, 2008, p. 3). A number of feminist scholars have deconstructed and challenged biomedicalized discourses that conflate fatness with poor health (Bordo, 1993, 1999; Evans, Evans, & Rich, 2003; Gard & Wright, 2005; Rice, 2006, 2007) and demonstrate the manner in which institutions of health/fitness are waging a "war on fat" that is in actuality, through the discursive processes of Cartesian dualism, a war on women and racialized "others" as excessive bodies, closer to nature, or even animalistic and unrestrained (Bordo, 1993; Hill-Collins, 1997). As historically contingent discourses, Jutel (2005, p. 114) suggests that,

> a contrasting set of assumptions is associated with plumpness as compared with those from the early twentieth century: fat people are seen as less trustworthy, self-indulgent, hedonistic, friendless, and sedentary (Polivy, Garner, and Garfinkel, 1986), physicians describe their obese patients as weak-willed, ugly and awkward (Maddox and Liederman, 1969) and social discrimination against obese people is rampant (Puhl and Brownell, 2001).

This process of continually (re)defining 'abject' bodies in accordance with contingent, contemporary social concerns—and often emerging from the perspective(s) of a dominant, privileged subject position—can be understood through what cultural studies scholars, influenced by postmodernism and poststructuralism, would conceptualize as the floating signification of embodiment (see, for example, Andrews, 1996, Baudrillard, 1983; Grossberg, 1986, 1992; Hall, 1997a, 1997b; Kellner, 1989, 1991). In this contingent formulation of bodily appraisal and signification,

> our bodies are forever in the process of undeclared construction, and once we dislodge fatness from biology and begin to start thinking of who is categorized as fat as a social decision (in the same way that categorizing who is disabled is a social decision), what once appeared as solid categories surface as fluid boundaries (Herndon, 2002, p. 132)

A body that is considered "good" and "moral" is constructed along axes that position and reinforce heteronormative masculinity, whiteness, and middle-class entrepreneurialism as the idealized norms for the development of a healthy citizenry (Duncan, 2008; Sykes, 2008).

Once established and reproduced in both the material relations of everyday life (public policy, health care, fitness industries) and the intertextual workings of popular and news media (fitness magazines, commercials, films, etc.), dominant notions of health, as linked to the appearance of the body, become normalized as desirable subject positions requiring individual effort to achieve (Briggs & Hallin, 2007; Roy, 2008). For those whose physical appearance runs contrary to the established norms of health and fitness however, the body becomes a site for aesthetic judgment and moral indignation. In this way, definitions of individual failure have broadened to include "obese," fat, or corpulent bodies that become further stigmatized, and marginalized, in relation to other axes of their positionality, and the social context in which they find themselves. This is an important consideration since the targets of philanthropic interventions, including those of BMoreFit,

often come from poorer, neglected and underserved, black neighborhoods. Thus, Sykes (2008), drawing upon Shaw (2005), notes that, "iconic representations of the Black female body in the United States overwhelmingly define the standards against which White femininity is constructed. Fatness and Blackness, she argues 'display an uncanny coincidence of boundaries' (Shaw, 2005, p. 152) such that the Black female fat body signals a concentration of asexualized, maternal plentitude" (p. 73). Conversely, and in contradistinction from the effects of symbolic violence often waged against larger women of color in particular (Bourdieu, 2001b; Shaw, 2005), Monaghan (2008) suggests that white men can more easily defy and resist biomedical or popular discourses that conflate fatness with moral failure due to their privileged subjectivity. Nevertheless, the dominant perception of overweight and obese bodies, of all shapes and colors, is one of laziness, lack of effort, and failure to take control over one's life. Such ideas are frequently (re)produced within the health promotions of various agencies like the Coalition for a Healthy Maryland, which has generally avoided depictions of African Americans as embodied and textualized representatives of poor health.

For example, in yet another ad from the Coalition for a Healthy Maryland, the body of a large white adult male is shown, sitting on what appears to be a park bench, although, the man's body obscures it. The image is also closely zoomed in on the midsection to the point that the man's stomach takes up half of the entire image. The caption reads: "*63% of*

Marylanders are overweight or obese…That's 3,371,006 people in our state! Time To Fix This Picture." There are several ways to interpret the message here, but what is perhaps most salient, is the subtle suggestion that a large man sitting down in the park (as opposed to standing, walking, and being active) is a visual blight that requires "fixing." Crudely, the image reinforces dominant perceptions of laziness and inaction on behalf of those categorized as overweight and obese. Thus, public health promotions such as these follow a simple, yet powerful, logic that reinforces the conflation of moral worth with ocular inspection of the body; fit bodies are depicted in motion, while unfit bodies are depicted in static positions, each of which serves to articulate the idea that it is only the individual's personal choice (to walk, run, or sit, for example) which determines their health outcomes. Since the image conceals the man's identity by cropping out the head (further magnifying the overall image and thus, size of the man's midsection), the body becomes a fetishized representation of obesity and an easy target for the reinforcement of social ideas viewing fatness as personal failure. Furthermore, in the highly publicized "war on obesity," the very rhetoric used to discuss fat bodies constructs their "otherness" as a preventable social choice that subsequently leads to the labeling and categorizing of such bodies as lazy, immoral, anti-social, and in need of rebuke. As Herndon (2005) notes,

> Obesity is not a pathogen, not free floating, and never a virus that attacks a helpless and innocent victim. Instead, obesity is virtually always typecast as a condition brought on oneself. A war against obesity, then, cannot be a war against a faceless pathogen. Instead, obesity is a condition of human causation and therefore necessitates a war against the group of people participating in the volitional behaviors that cause it (p. 129-130)

This "war on obesity" and the language used to discuss it, has become so commonplace and normalized that some variation of it appeared in every organization I encountered during this study. Baltimore Livehealthy for example, suggests that "*combating* obesity" is of key

importance in its overall mission to improve the health of Baltimore citizens (see www.healthycitydays.com).

Amongst its numerous programs and initiatives, the Y recently received a two-year, $280,000 grant from CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield to continue developing their campaign to "*fight* childhood obesity" through the 'Fit n Fun Childhood Obesity Program' that is defined as a, "research-based exercise, education, and nutrition program" (Y of Central Maryland Media Report, August 2012). The BMoreFit program changed its mission statement and purpose from a specific focus on "training at-risk youth in principles of fitness and health", to the simpler, widely accepted and recognizable, and thus, more likely fundable, statement of purpose, "*combating* childhood obesity" in Baltimore. And of course, the Coalition for a Healthy Maryland makes no pretense about its purpose to "*combat* childhood obesity in Maryland" by pushing legislation that would provide incentives to parents for anti-obesity efforts, and participation in qualified programming that fights obesity. What is demonstrated by the urgency and proclaimed magnitude of such initiatives is that obesity, and particularly childhood obesity, is a serious problem, and an individual pathology, that must be vigorously fought by responsible adults.

Of critical importance here is the manner in which, 'obesity crisis' discourses have evolved over time, and been strongly articulated to the cultural logics of neoliberal individualism such that they normalize the everyday stigmatization of overweight/obese bodies, perceived to be the products of laziness, excess, and an unwillingness to take personal responsibility. In contrast, it is interesting to consider the reconfiguration of breast cancer discourse in the United States, shifting "from a stigmatized disease and individual tragedy best dealt with privately and in isolation, to a neglected epidemic worthy of public debate and political organizing, to an enriching and affirming experience, during which

women with breast cancer are rarely 'patients' and mostly 'survivors' (King, 2004, p. 475). While significant philanthropic investment has been made in the areas of both breast cancer and obesity, these conditions carry significantly different discursive connotations that reflect dominant modes of thinking about health and responsibility. Primarily, the distinction arises from the classification of obesity as an outcome of lifestyle and personal choice, rather than being linked to any hereditary or environmental causes.

Thus, while breast cancer survivors have been discursively positioned as being strong-willed, indefatigable, and worthy of support networks to overcome the disease which has afflicted them (King, 2001, 2004, 2008), the 'disease' of obesity, much like the public perception of alcoholism or drug addiction, has been conceptualized and discussed with language that positions those scientifically defined as 'overweight' or 'obese' as moral failures in need of rebuke and/or intervention. I would also suggest that this is partly why a specific focus on "childhood obesity" has become foregrounded in the popular lexicon of health debates because younger children are at a critical juncture for determining the nature of their impending adult lifestyle. Often perceived as easier targets for intervention, more easily forgiven for their opulent excesses, and considered more malleable in terms of changing their mindset, behaviors, and lifestyle, young people have become a proverbial 'ground zero' for the "obesity wars" (Cooper, 2009; Grossberg, 2005). The reality of this discursive construction of fatness, the moralizing of health, and the resulting 'war on obesity' that it engenders, is really about the increasing normalcy of responsibilization tactics that seek to promote entrepreneurial agents and an individualist ethos (Briggs & Hallin, 2007; Colquhoun, 1990; Gard & Wright, 2001, 2005). In this context, everyone is responsible for himself or herself, and nobody can blame poor environmental conditions, or the structures, systems, and institutions that created them, for their fate. If you are unhealthy, it is your

own fault. And for those lacking the financial, social, or cultural capital to engage in healthy lifestyle behaviors, this logic is particularly insidious since, by this definition, the individual is solely responsible for their quality of life and no longer has access to, the kind of social safety net our country provided prior to the ascendance of neoliberalization.

Preventive health, fiscal crises, and civic responsibility

Another common trope within Baltimore's voluntary sector is related to the importance of health prevention as a solution to budgetary cuts, the ballooning costs of health care, and an overall national debt crisis. From my time spent in the field speaking with representatives from Recreation and Parks, the Mayor's office, and several non-profits (Baltimore LiveHealthy, Y of Central Maryland, and members of the BMoreFit Board of Directors), the high costs of health care and the fear of increased taxation to cover them, was the most often cited rationale for implementing preventive health strategies. I found it interesting that in many of these conversations, the sole fact that I was working with BMoreFit, and possessed knowledge and experience about health and fitness from my personal training background, seemed to facilitate the tacit assumption that I agreed with their position that poor urban populations were the prime culprits in need of reformative

efforts to reverse the trends of obesity and ill health. As such, they were freely discussed as being the primary targets for interventions centered on the mantra of preventive health in order to make the city a "healthier, happier, and more productive place to live, work and play" (www.healthycitydays.com). Quite shockingly, and with reference to promoting health prevention amongst communities in Baltimore, I was told by the Director of BMoreFit that, "we're dealing with a lot of uneducated communities that just don't get it, and they're lazy and they're drug addicted, and the poverty levels are such that they're just not proactive enough…" (Personal Communication, April 2010). While I was careful not to explicitly state and thereby expose my political disagreements with individuals expressing these kinds of acontextual and ahistorical sentiments (an act that would inhibit my access), my embodied presence and positionality (white male, PhD candidate in Kinesiology), title ('BMoreFit Research Partner'), and employment history (Certified Personal Fitness Trainer), produced an almost unquestioned and implied understanding amongst those I spoke with that, "*we*" were all on the same side.

While I often struggled internally with the fact that I was being "read" and interpreted contrary to my actual politics and cultural background, particularly when in proximity to BMoreFit students or the everyday folks I often met at Recreation centers across the city, I could not pass up the opportunity to hear how these professionals of health and fitness really felt about such issues. In an interview with the Director of BMoreFit, I asked about the overall motivations for health and fitness professionals to participate, and in some cases, give freely of their time to help non-profits similar to BMoreFit:

> I do have some thoughts about that and it goes back to what I said earlier about a village or community taking care of themselves, okay? And you look and when there's a disaster in the world, how people pitch in and help and you see it, like what happened in Haiti. And the world comes together to help. Well, if funds are cut from recs and parks and other things, then we as individuals have a responsibility to our children and to ourselves to step up

> to the plate. Now, just think if more and more people think this way, what can be done. If everybody just did their part, we'd save tons of money on healthcare, people would be happier, live longer, and have greater self worth from taking care of themselves and being able to help others do the same (Personal interview, March, 2011).

In the mind of the Director and the majority of those I spoke with who represented BMoreFit, Baltimore LiveHealthy, Baltimore Recs & Parks, and the Y of Central Maryland, there seemed to be an almost unquestioned acceptance for the idea that greater personal responsibility for fitness and health was the most appropriate and indeed, only viable response to fiscal cutbacks in state spending on recreation, health, and fitness. Subsequently, I argue that the attraction of responsibilization within philanthropic initiatives and the desire to volunteer in "re-educating" the public about their duties and responsibilities to their own bodies, is at least partly driven by:

> 1. The fear of an increasingly unhealthy (urban) public that could potentially creep into the sanitized, healthy, safe spaces of the middle and upper classes of Baltimore.
>
> 2. The fear of inflated health care costs that are perceived as being the outcome of "Obamacare" and/or excessive state spending on the poor.
>
> 3. A somewhat paternalistic feeling of responsibility and/or guilt for those less fortunate.
>
> 4. A desire to belong to a trendy non-profit organization that is helping the less fortunate.
>
> 5. The influence of an emergent, and steadily growing, voluntary sector in Baltimore that has made it more common, accepted, and popular to be engaged in some form of charity or philanthropic endeavor.

While organizations like BMoreFit attempted, at least initially, to intervene in such issues through more direct engagement, there are many more that simply promote these ideals through media awareness campaigns and occasional public events. For example, Baltimore LiveHealthy Inc. is devoted to "educating the citizens of Baltimore about the importance of

good nutrition, regular exercise, and preventive health screenings so that…residents can improve their health outcomes" (www.healthycitydays.com). This entails holding a "Healthy City Days" event for a span of five days in October each year where residents can participate in free health education clinics and fitness training seminars.

However, while education is certainly critical, it is simply not enough to provide infrequent, charity-laden forms of educational training for low-income communities that already lack access to resources for good health. In other words, all the efforts to educate the public about a healthy and nutritious diet, for example, will make little difference if people lack the income and means to purchase food that meets such requirements. And yet, we commonly hear about how the poor and indignant masses of Baltimore are a "*drain on the health care system*" as one representative from the Y of Central Maryland put it, to me (personal communication, Jan 2012), because "*they make a choice just like you and I do*." Sadly, for most of the elite I came into contact with, inside these networks of health and fitness professionals and philanthropists, there exists a strong tendency to assume that the poor have made their choice and that, "…they would rather eat fast food, claim unemployment, and live sedentary lives" so nobody can be blamed but them (Y of Central MD coordinator, personal communication, Jan 2012). Thus, a reactionary outcry, both organized and targeted (via institutions and policymaking), diffuse and vitriolic (via angry individual citizens), has attended, and helped to bolster, the development of neoliberal health promotion activities as a corrective to the "crises" of obesity and poor health (Jutel, 2005). According to this view the social determinants of health are perceived as less controllable than the promotion of health through the neoliberal mantra of personal responsibility. In other words, the dominant message is that regardless of your living conditions, positional circumstance, and

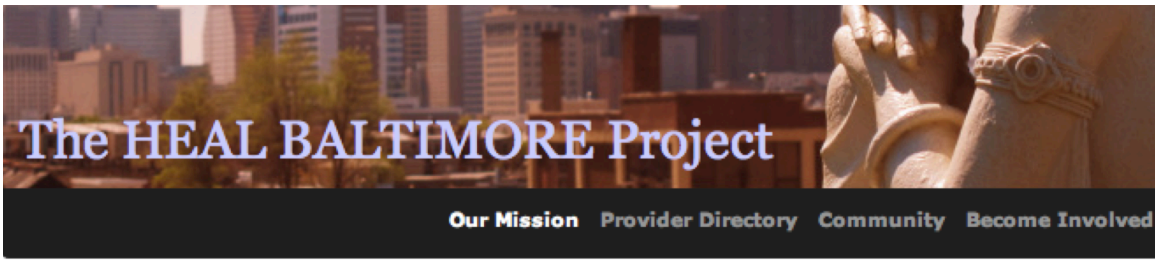
socio-economic status, everyone has a part to play in reducing the cost and burden of public health.

A new language of Healthism: Self-empowerment and the private body

While some organizations take a more direct and overt route with regard to promoting health prevention and the importance of personal responsibility, some non-profits, like the Baltimore HEAL Project, espouse a rhetoric of self-empowerment to suggest the need for individuals to seek out resources and enact lifestyle changes that will allow the individual subject to take pride in their own health and fitness related activities. Through the more subtle, and seemingly progressive language of empowerment, the logics of healthism appear even more "commonsensical" due to its focus on individualism and lifestyle choices, of which personal fitness discourses explicitly (re)produce. For example, the overall message of the HEAL project is that health and fitness opportunities should exist for everyone despite color, creed, or social status. However, such opportunities are only made available to those individuals who actively seek them out through the appropriate channels, meet established standards, accept unreservedly the terms of the benevolent institution, and put in the necessary effort to acquire free and/or discounted services that are normally reserved for those who can afford them through the private sphere.

The youth selected to participate in BMoreFit, and other non-profit programs within the Safe and Sound organization, or Back on My Feet, for example, have to demonstrate their potential through various application processes and required screenings, that effectively limit the number of participants to only the most determined and promising. In other words, while a rare few may secure these limited opportunities, there are many thousands more who do not. And we are not talking about winning the lottery or making it to the NBA here, we are talking about basic rights to health, physical activity, and wellness, things that were once a public right, not a private concern (Giroux, 2005; Ingham, 1985; Howell & Ingham, 2001). Given the contemporary hegemony of roll-with-it neoliberalization (Keil, 2009), the battle for scarce resources is being felt at every level, yet it is most problematic and dire for the poorest and most segregated communities within urban America. In Baltimore, the HEAL project was another non-profit that sought to intervene in health disparities by educating the public about how to pursue options for living a healthy lifestyle:

> The need for individuals to *empower themselves and others to take responsibility for their own health and well-being* is greater than ever. As we build out intentions, we strive to offer such empowerment and wellness to all people (The HEAL Baltimore project, 2011, *emphasis added*).



Denoting the complexity and diffuseness of neoliberal healthism, the HEAL project espoused the logics of individual responsibility while simultaneously providing a public service that resembled the principles of social welfarism. After noting that practitioners all over the world are embracing more holistic and well-rounded approaches to health, healing,

and the body, they stated that, "the benefit of these services are limited to those who are privileged to afford them. HEAL Baltimore will address this service gap." (Heal Baltimore Project, 2011). Further, in discussing its intended role to help people find and obtain access to "non-discriminatory whole health care providers," they stated that these services "should not be reserved solely for the elite." In this way, Heal Baltimore sought to intervene in a key site of injustice plaguing poorer, and predominantly African American populations within Baltimore: the lack of access to health care provision and costly holistic wellness services that target the affluent.

However, their underlying philosophy was that of prevention, self-care, and holistic modalities of health that, for a number of reasons beyond the economic, often preclude participation from the very populations they attempted to help. For example, as if to promote acceptance and awareness of such preventive health measures, they suggested that, "putting confidence in natural practices and learning to tap into our own innate healing capacities, we can often avoid having to depend on the larger institutions of health care when it is unnecessary" (Heal Baltimore Project, 2012). While such logic appears, on one side, to confirm their concern for underprivileged populations and their desire to help them become healthier, these are the same populations that *already* lack access to "the larger institutions of health care" and have not had access to the kinds of health education and knowledge about holistic healthcare that the organization seeks to promote. In short, the HEAL project, while well intentioned:

> 1). Failed to recognize cultural barriers (focusing only on the economic factors precluding participation in holistic medicine) that impact individuals' decision making with regard to their health.

2). Imposed a preventive and holistic health imperative upon communities that lack access even to the most basic healthcare resources that were once a public right.

3). Utilized the language and philosophy of neoliberal healthism (knowingly or not) to incite poorer populations to "empower themselves" and take responsibility for their health in ways that would direct their attention away from their lack of access to mainstream medicine and health care, and towards the potential to seek out alternative forms of healthcare, along with the learning of practices that encourage citizens to, "tap into our own innate healing capacities."

Without discrediting the potential of self-healing capacities and holistic forms of healthcare, the call to *heal one's own self* follows an eerily striking logic with that of the responsibilizing tactics of healthism. As such, the project was more a call to action for underprivileged residents to take it upon themselves to seek out preventive and holistic healthcare providers (utilizing the web-based directories of the HEAL Baltimore organization) and thereby become less dependent upon the "larger institutions of health care," empower themselves by taking responsibility for their own health, and, to paraphrase a quote by author and activist, Marianne Williamson on their website, find the power in their own heart to make it happen.

While the HEAL project had good intentions for serving underprivileged populations lacking adequate access to health care provision, not unlike other Baltimore non-profits, it is a further representation of the pervasive neoliberal healthism in that it addressed the capacity of individuals to become entrepreneurial agents of their own health (Rose, 1999). Unsurprisingly, the HEAL Baltimore project has, at the time of writing, dissolved and removed their website, along with the natural and holistic health care provider

directories it had once provided. For residents of Baltimore lacking health insurance, and the financial means to afford sufficient care in the private market, the unfamiliar and esoteric promotion of holistic healing measures via the HEAL Baltimore project website, must not have been successful enough to warrant its continuation. In short, the failure of the HEAL project reflects the limits of the voluntary sector and the frequency with which well-intentioned philanthropists generate novel ideas, rapidly (even hastily) implement programs that reflect their expertise, and learn by trial and error that such small scale targeted efforts (lacking strong support from a wider network of collaborative voluntarism) have a slim chance of making a viable impact.

Conversely, a nationally recognized organization that has actually thrived from its promulgation of self-empowerment narratives is the Back on my Feet (BoMF) community running program, with a chapter in Baltimore, MD (see, www.backonmyfeet.org). The official mission statement of BoMF is as follows:

> Back on My Feet (BoMF) is a national for-purpose 501(c)3 organization that uses running to help those experiencing homelessness change the way they see themselves so they can make real change in their lives that results in employment and independent living. The organization's mission is not to create runners within the homeless population, but to use running to create self-sufficiency in the lives of those experiencing homelessness. The program's success is measured by how many Members achieve independence through employment and housing. Through dedication and hard work, Residential Members (those experiencing homelessness) earn the opportunity to create a new road for themselves. Running leads to personal transformation and dedication to the program leads to access to training, employment and housing resources. Through community and corporate support, the program strives to change the perception of homelessness. Back on My Feet has received incredible media support, including attention from NBC Nightly News, ABC World News, CNN, and The Today Show for its ingenuity in tackling this difficult social issue (www.backonmyfeet.org).

Through the modality of running, the homeless population is urged to, quite literally, take the proper steps toward self-sufficiency by participating in activities of self-betterment, like

running. Participating members must meet certain criteria (having lived in a homeless shelter at least 30 days), and complete a "dedication contract, goals sheet and evaluation survey" before they can run with a group. Running groups meet three times a week at 5:30am, and are made up of "Residential members" (homeless shelter residents) and "Non-residential members" (community volunteers). After thirty days, residential members who have higher than 90% attendance are eligible to advance to the "next steps" phase of the program, which provides access to education and job training opportunities, as well as the chance to apply for financial aid to assist with employment, housing, and self-sufficiency.

As a tremendously successful non-profit, BoMF is certainly unique, representing an unapologetically neoliberal approach to complex social ills like homelessness. However, the great irony of this self-empowerment mantra is that historically embedded conditions of inequality and injustice—those oft discredited, overlooked, or ignored, processes of urban restructuring and disinvestment responsible for mass unemployment and homelessness—cannot be mitigated by the act of running. Amidst Non-residential members who can *choose* to run for the sake of personal enjoyment, fitness, or sport (i.e., marathon training), and who possess the economic capital (time and money) to run frequently, the Resident members are quite literally, running because they have *no choice*, and so the opportunity to use the BoMF program to achieve self sufficiency is perhaps the *only choice* they have left. But why is running the physical activity of choice for BoMF and a required condition for a homeless shelter resident to receive any form of assistance? On their website, the legacy of its formation can be summed up by the suggestion that, "early morning runs have always been an integral part of every morning for Founder & CEO Anne Mahlum" (www.backonmyfeet.org). Such a simple rationale is common to many non-profit, voluntary

sector efforts, which tend to emerge from the ideas, perspectives, and familiar practices of those who create them; BMoreFit is certainly no different.

The proclamation that BoMF is, "changing lives one mile, job, and house at a time" has garnered incredible financial and social support from elites, who view the practice of running, as an appropriate measure of individual will and determination. Arguably, this ideal represents a fundamental core of neoliberal ideology in that it is expected that those seeking help must first be willing to help themselves, and demonstrate that the appropriate steps have been taken to deserve any kind of support they may, or may not receive. In short, one must be humble, willing, and in deference to program leaders who possess the real power to change individual's lives (i.e., using their social networks and capital to advocate for Resident members' employment, housing opportunities, etc.). Further, the limits of the voluntary sector can be clearly seen in this endeavor since it effectively screens participants via the modality of running (only those healthy enough to run can participate), and sets requirements for those seeking job training/education to first and foremost run, and thereby demonstrate their worth. However, for the many thousands more of the homeless population unable to participate in running (perhaps due to injury, impairments, illness, or disinterest), BoMF does not represent a viable program to combat homelessness, its causes, and its impact.

Conclusion: Moving towards BMoreFit

In this environment of hit and miss philanthropy, the basic necessities of human life—services, programs, and provisions that were once a public right—have been transferred to public/private institutions and the voluntary sector, which have little public accountability and cannot feasibly provide for the majority of the afflicted population (Judd

& Simpson, 2003). *Baltimore Livehealthy, Y of Central Maryland, Heal Baltimore, the Coalition for a Healthy Maryland, Back on my Feet,* and *BMoreFit* are just a few examples of organizations focused on intervening in the fitness/health related issues affecting the underprivileged of Baltimore city; they could also be viewed as representative of the broader politics of neoliberal healthism in which public health is increasingly defined and realized through the advocating of individual responsibilities for health (Cheek, 2008; Crawford, 1980; Roy, 2008). Thus, such initiatives could be described as being in the business of changing or inculcating particular attitudes, disseminating particular knowledges about health and fitness, and reinforcing the sort of logic that would justify, and gather support for, a slide toward the complete privatization of health and fitness.

We might well consider Zizek's (2009) argument of global philanthropy with regard to the conditions of domestic health policy and shifting priorities: "the first victim of measures destined to reestablish "financial health" is health itself, in other words, spending on health services. The space then opens up for Western humanitarians to bemoan the catastrophic condition of medical services…and offer to help in the form of charity" (p. 81). Against a backdrop of alarming rates of childhood obesity, heart disease, and diabetes in U.S. inner cities, programs like BMoreFit become perceived as inculpable saviors due to their unique and localized focus on addressing health and fitness related disparities amongst those populations lacking equal, and adequate, access to resources of health and wellness (Silk & Andrews, 2006; Marmot, 2004).

Further, the BMoreFit program is a declared "downstream" or "grassroots" effort to address individuals within struggling communities, and provide them with the education and training to take care of themselves (through employment opportunities in the exercise/fitness market and personal care of the body via fitness/health knowledge), and to

have a positive impact upon the deleterious communities in which they live (through teaching group exercise classes as volunteers in community centers, churches, or local organizations). In this sense, BMoreFit is not merely a provider of space in which potentially threatening bodies can be surveilled and contained through particular corporeal practices. Rather, the impetus and formation of its philanthropic intentions reflects a middle class concern over the body and its routine maintenance and management (Bourdieu, 1984; Dworkin & Wachs, 2009). Given the extent of Baltimore's voluntary sector, the filling in of gaps left by the evisceration of the state has particular, conjuncturally articulated, and contextually specific effects upon the well being of urban residents and the outcomes of public policy and city governance. In other words, I suggest that there are complex and contested motives attending the emergence of philanthropic health initiatives, preoccupied with addressing health *behaviors* and *lifestyles* as the "core" of *all* health outcomes. Additionally, it is suggested that such programs gain credibility, support, and status from reproducing powerful discourses of responsibilization that corroborate spaces of "actually existing neoliberalism" (Brenner & Theodore, 2002, p. 349) within dominant, and already established, institutions of medicine, health, and fitness (Howell & Ingham, 2001).

As the legitimate consequences of numerous larger, interconnected, and contextual processes and forces (poverty, structural racism, government retrenchment, gentrification, urban disinvestment, declining public infrastructure), the overall well being of impoverished communities has historically been overlooked and/or disregarded (Wacquant, 2007). That is, until it becomes a problem that infringes upon the safety, cleanliness, order, financial security, commercial investment, and continued vibrancy of surrounding areas and well to do residents on the peripheries of the urban core (Harvey, 2001). In such moments, perhaps the most rational and logical proposition to combat the flow of what many interpret to be,

the perceived pathologies of urban space (drugs, gangs, violence, crime, joblessness, homelessness, and poor health), is to address the *individual* who is seen as the primary target of top-down forms of intervention. As a result, and reflecting the pervasive 'normalization' of neoliberal ideologies as the only viable solutions to all biological, financial, and ecological crises (Zizek, 2009), programmatic initiatives within the burgeoning voluntary sector (physical activity, sport, and fitness-based programs) have sought to address the outcomes of living in dilapidated urban spaces (unemployment, lack of education, poor health, inactivity) by addressing affected ***individuals*** rather than the ***conditions*** which have shaped their existence (deindustrialization, civic disinvestment, public retrenchment, and hyper-segregation).

The BMoreFit program, as with other Baltimore based initiatives, exemplifies such logics in terms of its emphasis on targeting individuals and *training* them to be more *productive* citizens, "ambassadors of fitness" in their own communities, and ultimately, less of a burden on the state. What is intriguing yet terribly disturbing, is how this logic of individual health and fitness has become sutured to the politicized language of 'lifestyle management' and how incredibly prevalent this attitude toward the *morality* of individual health has become (Howell & Ingham, 2001). The popular sentiment, or judgment of a seemingly ubiquitous, neoliberal-healthist contingent, reflects the powerfully articulated formations of cultural practices, texts, sites, and events that over time have coagulated in the common sense logic of self-improvement as measured on and through the body (Grossberg, 1992; Howell & Ingham, 2001; Ingham, 1985). Such ideals flowed throughout the rhetoric of BMoreFit Faculty who regularly indicated the desperate need for preventive healthcare programs, and physical activity-based initiatives, that target "problem" populations, and "at-risk" youth, to

facilitate the use of their bodies in ways that would be less destructive to their own self, and the society at large (Cooper, 2009; Hartmann, 2001; Pitter & Andrews, 1997).

Of course, the pleasure derived from exercise, and the physiological, psychological, and social benefits of its practice, should not be disregarded. The Director of BMoreFit, and the program he created, has attempted to do something positive in the community in terms of providing a few individuals with an opportunity to gain skills within fitness and health to gain employment. Following the evisceration of the social contract, incessant neoliberalization, and various health, environmental, financial, and social crises marking our contemporary condition of postmodernity (Harvey, 1989), perhaps such localized efforts are the only conceivable way to have a positive impact on struggling communities even if it can only feasibly reach a miniscule portion of the population. Nevertheless, interventionist programs of self-betterment must also be questioned in terms of where "techniques of relating to oneself as a subject of unique capacities worthy of respect run up against practices of relating to oneself as the target of discipline, duty, and docility" (Rose, 1996, quoted in Howell & Ingham, 2001, p. 345). Without the capacity, resources, time, or even the ambition in some cases, to develop a more egalitarian and comprehensive plan to assist struggling communities in combating poor health, the efforts of individual philanthropists and public/private partnerships are constrained, and often compelled to employ, and thereby engender, the same logics of individualism and competitiveness through which a "promising" *few* might rise above the conditions of their impoverishment. What is certain is that BMoreFit is not alone in their desire and efforts at inculcating positive social change, and the questionable *manner* in which they seek to accomplish it.

CHAPTER TWO: A VIEW OF FITNESS PHILANTHROPY FROM SANITIZED SPACES AND PRIVILEGED BODIES

> We simply cannot go to the laborers—urban or peasant—in the banking style, to give them "knowledge" or to impose upon them the model of the "good man" contained in a program whose content we have ourselves organized. Many political and educational plans have failed because their authors designed them according to their own personal views of reality, never once taking into account (except as mere objects of their actions) the *men-in-a-situation* to whom their program was ostensibly directed (Freire, 2000, p. 94).

The Baltimore Fitness Academy, or BMoreFit, stands as one of many non-profit, 501c3 organizations within Baltimore that seek to creatively intervene in matters of health and fitness. Over the course of its existence since 2008, the organization has undergone a number of programmatic changes and adjustments that reflect the values, imperatives, and sentiments of the director, and the board of directors. Initially created from the perception that Baltimore's young people need to be more actively engaged in productive and healthy pursuits to counter the influence of drugs, crime, and gangs, the structure of the program was from the very beginning, influenced by the desire to reform and redirect the bodily practices and lifestyles of underserved, or "at-risk," youth towards more "acceptable" pursuits. Although an admirable pursuit with good intentions to improve health and increase the social mobility of a few, one must also consider who is responsible for defining what is considered acceptable or unacceptable with regard to the use and maintenance of the physical body?

As a particular response to this alleged need to reform behavior—no doubt influenced by the dominant discourses of healthism and individual responsibility that exercise culture has so readily adopted—the actual formation of BMoreFit reflects a voluntary response to the discursive repositioning of accountability within government and public policy. As suggested in chapter one, a significant individualizing shift in political and

economic policy has occurred (Harvey, 2005), concomitant to the manner in which quasi public-private discourse about health and responsibility has likewise shifted (Colquhoun, 1990; Crawford, 1977, 1980; Howell & Ingham, 2001; Ingham, 1985). Subsequently, while the interventionist efforts of prosperous citizens may be well intentioned and perhaps laudable, they are nonetheless prone to carry and reproduce a range of ideals and values reflective of those providing the assistance. It is therefore necessary to consider positional and experiential conflict and contestation, which may or may not manifest within a context of privileged, middle class white adults attempting to train groups of underprivileged African American youth.

While visiting the BAC, engaging in mundane everyday conversations, observing the interactions between faculty and students, and participating in the occasional group exercise class, I was often concerned with what was being taught, by whom, and for what purpose. Already attuned to the dominant logics of fitness culture, I sought to examine the ways in which middle class sensibilities, specters of white privilege, and the exclusivity of the BAC health club space were combining in such a way as to articulate fitness and health as the normalized pursuit and domain, of the privileged, wealthy, educated, and white. Subsequently, the spectacle of fitness philanthropy reinforces the idea that underprivileged, poor, and undereducated African American youth are in dire need of this "civilizing" mission to reform their behavior, health, and lifestyle.

Having established the broader economic, political, and social context from which BMoreFit emerged and exists, this chapter examines the complex articulations of philanthropy and white privilege within the exclusive spaces of the BAC. How the program actually came into existence, why it was created, and what it seeks to accomplish will be discussed as it relates to philanthropic motivations and the desired outcomes of those

championing such forms of privatized social welfare. Stemming from the dominant discourses of health prevention and the responsibilizing logics of healthism, discussed in the previous chapter, I will more fully explore the manifestation of such ideals at the level of lived experience. More specifically, this chapter discusses the lived experiences, embodied politics, and ideological assumptions of white privilege and social status, which, as I argue, the organizers of BMoreFit shared, as part of a much larger network of like-minded individual philanthropists in the burgeoning voluntary sector. As previously suggested, the politics underpinning the Director's decision to create BMoreFit is reflective of a range of intertextually produced social ideas, politico-economic ideologies, class and racial/ethnic subjectivities, socio-spatial locations, and polarized cultural experiences within the hyper-segregated and contradictory spaces of Baltimore City. Because the director and the board of directors are part of a predominantly white, privileged, and highly educated class of Baltimore City residents, it was not surprising to find that they also tended to share similar beliefs and ways of perceiving social problems in Baltimore. Their proposed solutions to combating poor health, juvenile delinquency, and childhood obesity in particular, reflect significant concerns about the future direction and development of the city and their ability to influence that process.

To this degree, the present chapter examines the experience of (white) privilege and social status (economic, social, cultural), and its relationship to philanthropic motivations, ideological and material forces, and the specific means through which a program like BMoreFit became an accepted, and widely endorsed vehicle for improving the health of underprivileged communities in Baltimore. At times, the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 1978, 1984, 1986) was helpful in examining the relationship of class privilege and health (see also, Frew & McGillivray, 2005; Williams, 1995), keeping in mind the need to articulate class

and race/ethnicity within a given field (Byrne, 2009). However, I also drew upon the musings of Slavoj Zizek (1994, 2009) to deconstruct the complexities of ideological acceptance and complicity in the securing of power and interests, particularly in the case of mobilizing a spectacle of charity to legitimate the continuation of class and racial/ethnic oppression under the guise of creative capitalism. This is where it became both difficult and worthwhile to negotiate the complicated role of BMoreFit in simultaneously (re)producing the institutional logics and structures of neoliberalism as a localized and generic politico-economic strategy on one hand (Peck & Tickell, 2002), while also enacting the possibility of social ascendance for a few individuals through its educational, job-training programming.

Having broadly outlined the material conditions and political economic shifts making philanthropy both a necessary and attractive alternative to social welfarism—particularly for those experiencing a 'distance from necessity' (Bourdieu, 1984)—this chapter engages the nuances of BMoreFit through an ethnographic examination of the Director, Board of Directors, Faculty members, and BAC employees and patrons. Following a brief contextualization of BMoreFit's emergence within what has been termed a "social problems industry," (Pitter & Andrews, 1997), my intention is to provide a critical reflection on this particular form of "fitness philanthropy," and discuss some of the complexities involved when private voluntary interventions proceed from the powerful and privileged to the disempowered and underserved.

The foundation(s) of fitness philanthropy: A new social problems industry?

> Any attempt to "soften" the power of the oppressor in deference to the weakness of the oppressed almost always manifests itself in the form of false generosity; indeed, the attempt never goes beyond this. In order to have the continued opportunity to express their "generosity," the oppressors must perpetuate injustice as well. An unjust social order is the permanent fount of

> this "generosity," which is nourished by death, despair, and poverty (Freire, 2000, p. 44).

In addition to the purposeful use of charity as part of an organization's strategic planning, much philanthropic intervention, particularly those on a local level, emerges as a response to the most pressing social issues of the day. As noted in the introductory chapter, numerous sport and recreation based non-profits began to emerge in response to escalating crime levels in inner city environments during the late eighties and early nineties, and the corresponding decline of public provision and funding for recreation and leisure (Pitter & Andrews, 1997). In particular, popularized Midnight Basketball programs are reflective of the manner in which sport and recreation became a vehicle for the advancement of ideologies and social policies that, under the guise of concerned philanthropy for the underserved, actually supported crime prevention strategies amongst urban youth, justified processes of "roll-back" neoliberalization (Keil, 2009), and effectively shifted social welfare towards the private sphere of voluntary organizations and wealthy philanthropists (see, for example, Hartmann, 2001, Hartmann & Depro, 2006; Pitter and Andrews, 1997).

For the urban throng unable to afford increasingly privatized forms of sport, recreation, and leisure, the lack of time and resources to participate has left this population, as Peter Saunders suggested, "cast adrift on the waterlogged raft of what is left of the welfare state" (quoted in Pitter & Andrews, 1997, p. 86). Within this context, the resultant outcomes of a crumbling civic infrastructure in cities like Baltimore (high unemployment, elevated crime levels, poor health and diet, high mortality rates, etc.), brought about, and exacerbated by, various forces and processes afflicting US cities (deindustrialization, neoliberalization, gentrification and de-facto segregation, to name but a few) are being addressed by individuals in positions of privilege and power, who possess the financial and social capital, to enact privately funded social programs. According to Pitter and Andrews (1997), the

social problems industry, for example, has *an underlying goal to prevent or reduce crime, juvenile delinquency, violence, drugs, and other social ills within urban environments*, through the development of recreation and sport based programs, to keep kids off the street, and redirect bodily practice toward more productive pursuits. More specifically, they suggest that within the hyper-competitive climate of neoliberal, free market fundamentalism, the retrenchment of public services has facilitated the creation of a social problems industry in which,

> …good Samaritans and community leaders compete for public grants and private funding within political and bureaucratic structures. In the context of sport provision, the industry has promoted the proliferation of target-oriented programs, like Midnight Basketball, that many managers feel can receive only public moral and financial support from the middle class if the programs give a direct benefit to this class. These programs target underserved youth, who are often referred to as disadvantaged, at-risk, Black, and inner-city youth or other labels (Pitter & Andrews, 1997, p. 86)

The privatized, results-driven orientation of such programs differs significantly from the philosophy of public recreation that once defined the opportunity for physical activity as a basic right of citizenship (Howell & Ingham, 2001; Ingham, 1985). Further, such programs are not accountable to the public, are not required to meet the needs (physical activity related or otherwise) of suffering and vulnerable populations, and in many cases cannot feasibly provide adequate support to even a fraction of inner city residents. Nevertheless, such programs aid in the discursive reinforcement of philanthropy as the most effective modality for the alleviation of social pathologies and poor health outcomes. By way of the director's innovation and successful solicitations of support from larger philanthropic institutions that impose their own parameters (the Open Society Institute, for example), BMoreFit came to likewise reproduce a highly structured, exclusive, and "results-driven" orientation to the helping, or rather, the *behavioral reformation*, of the underserved.

As the Director reiterated to me, his inspiration to create the BMoreFit program had emerged from his concerns over seeing young people near his neighborhood engaged in

"unhealthy," illegal, or suspicious activities. Following a long discussion in which he acknowledged the role of social determinants and how Baltimore's entrenched segregation and inequality had produced the conditions of poor health he was desirous to ameliorate, I was surprised to learn that his impetus to act, and create BMoreFit, had actually been prompted by his concerns over crime prevention and juvenile delinquency:

> Probably two years ago, I was in a neighborhood presentation given by the Baltimore City police on gang violence because I live in a neighborhood that's on the edge, and often you get people walking through the neighborhood who look a little shady. And they wanted to educate the community members about what to look for and identify as gang members; they wear certain clothes, they wear different colors, they use certain graffiti to identify, you know, their gangs and their families. And as I was sitting there and listening to the presentation, I was thinking, "wouldn't it be great if I could take my years of fitness experience and be able to create gangs of fitness ambassadors who could create healthier cities versus tear them apart" (BMoreFit Director, personal interview, March, 2010)

As I sat listening to the Director in this particular interview, I felt compelled to probe further into why the privileged get involved in charitable efforts and how they perceive their involvement in programs designed to help those less fortunate than themselves. Underpinning charitable works, there is a tendency for some individuals, protected by the structural privileges of their racial and class positionality and privilege, to perceive themselves as free rational subjects capable of affecting their material and social worlds with a peculiar degree of certainty (Lipsitz, 2006). With regard to health crises and a moralized preoccupation with the body then, the perception of "others" as moral failures in need of their philanthropic aid also supports the idea that creative interventions, supported by science and medicine, are desperately needed (Lupton, 1995; Murray, 2005). Attending the routine experience of status, success, and possession of material goods, facilitated by their privileged position in society, the privileged philanthropist envisions all the good he or she can do by utilizing particular forms of expertise and knowledge within an established

institutional framework. From the experience of both racial and class privilege, they have been taught to value their individualism, the "fruits" of their own labors, and the potential impact they can have upon the world, if it is their will to do such (Feagin, 2012; Lipsitz, 2006). Within BMoreFit, the Director's ambitious goal to use his "*years of fitness experience*" to "*create healthier cities*," by way of reforming gangs of delinquent youth to become "*gangs of fitness ambassadors*," is indicative of this sovereign and privileged worldview (Director's comments, personal communications, 2010-2011).

Akin to the rise of a social problems industry previously discussed, such forms of intervention reflect particular assumptions and motivations of the privileged—those possessing both the time and resources to impose their ideas and will upon those who, conversely, lack the platform to speak, and the resources to enact their own solutions to community issues. I do not imply that individuals actually living in highly segregated, underprivileged communities do not also want to reduce crime and improve the quality of life around them. Rather, I am suggesting that various forms of privilege tend to structure the patterns and formations of philanthropic endeavor which, set within a broader framework of neoliberal governance, reflect the concerns and desires of privileged individuals who inevitably impose their creative solutions on those without a voice. For those unfamiliar with, and spatially distanced from, the everyday struggles of poverty and underprivilege, the occasional sight of gangs, crime, and/or delinquency may just incite one to take action (as was the case for the Director, after seeing what he explained was expanding gang activity near the edge of his neighborhood). Rarely however are the motivations or strategies of intervention critically examined or created out of dialogue *with* those who are in need and targeted by the intervention. Perhaps in the wake of financial crises and a "fend for yourself" attitude brought about by the processes and outcomes of

neoliberalization (Giroux, 2005, 2006; Hall, 2011), so little is being done to solve "social problems" anymore that any effort to do so, regardless of the motivation, purpose, or qualifications, is happily welcomed. In this case, perhaps the view that 'something is better than nothing' has further justified public retrenchment and alleviated concern for structural changes (Ingham, 1985).

Formalizing BMoreFit: Competing for scarce resources and imposing programmatic structure

In terms of acquiring the necessary financial support, in a context of shifting priorities and budgetary crises, the BMoreFit program is aptly reflected within Pitter and Andrews' (1997) assessment of competition for scarce resources. Following the Director's idea to create BMoreFit, friends within his social network encouraged him to apply for a grant from the Open Society Institute (OSI) of Baltimore, created by hedge fund billionaire George Soros, who has donated over $70 million to the City of Baltimore. OSI, established in Baltimore in 1998, maintains the only field office "focusing on a single city and testing the effectiveness of place-based philanthropy strategy on some of the biggest challenges facing Baltimore…" (http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/grants/baltimore-community-fellowships). In 2009, the Director was awarded funding from OSI in the amount of $60,000 for 18 months, as part of their community fellowships program which seeks to "meet the challenges of Baltimore's most needy communities by identifying and supporting social innovators of unusual promise and providing them with the ingredients to ensure their ideas have a stable foundation and long-term viability" (http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/grants/baltimore-community-fellowships). As a major source of philanthropic investment in Baltimore, OSI has awarded 140 community fellowships since 1998, which provide funding to social entrepreneurs to remove barriers for

underprivileged populations in a variety of contexts. Individual applicants must meet certain criteria, and be evaluated by a committee comprised of local community leaders and OSI program staff.

After partnering with the Mayor's Office for Employment Development and YO Baltimore (Youth Opportunity Baltimore, a non-profit organization serving underprivileged youth), the Director recruited 8 young adults who had been labeled "at-risk" due to their status as either high school dropouts, unemployed, minor offenders, or "behaviorally challenged" youth coming from poor communities and broken homes. Within the initial iteration of the program, these individuals (hereafter referred to as "students" as they were called within the context of BMoreFit) were to be paid a modest wage for showing up to the work site (the BAC) 5 days a week, for 6 weeks during the summer. On any given day, students were required to participate in a range of hands-on learning activities, classroom seminars, and group exercise classes designed to teach them about fitness, health, and nutrition. These activities were in preparation to achieve a pre-determined goal: the successful obtainment of a YMCA group exercise instructor certificate. While the Director was intently focused on training this small group of individuals to change their own lives (helping them get into better shape, developing healthy lifestyle habits, learning life skills and knowledge to combat poor health outcomes, instilling discipline and a strong work ethic, and in general, encouraging a positive outlook on life regardless of the circumstances), the overarching goal of the organization, as the Director originally conceived it, was to mold these young adults into "ambassadors of fitness" who could take the messages of health, fitness, and nutrition they had received from BMoreFit, back into their own communities. A creative and novel idea to train the underserved to help the underserved, supporters of BMoreFit believed that the movement for healthy change amongst Baltimore's most

depressed and underfunded communities could be realized through "the transformative powers of fitness," which, if widely taught and followed, would produce a decline in obesity and negative health outcomes within Baltimore.

After receiving funding from OSI, and utilizing his skills as a former advertising and marketing professional, the Director promoted BMoreFit throughout the city's more affluent social networks and acquired significant backing from other non-profits (Safe & Sound, YO Baltimore), City Agencies (Department of Health, Department of Labor, Mayor's office), and other individual philanthropists and non-profit programs. In fact, the Director was proud of the fact that, as he jokingly reiterated on several occasions, he had "snuck in before the Mayor" and officially coined the catchy title of 'BMoreFit', establishing the website domain (www.bmorefit.org) before the Mayor could do so. Instead, Mayor Rawlings-Blake had to settle for www.befitbaltimore.com, which has since been obscured by other health promoting media initiatives like Baltimore Live Healthy (www.healthycitydays.com). With growing media visibility surrounding the astounding success of one particular student from the first summer training pilot program (an 18 year old young man who lost over 55 pounds and appeared to have completely altered his physical body, his outlook on life, and earning potential via employment as a group exercise instructor), and a growing contingent of BMoreFit volunteers, funders, and supporters, the Director decided to also apply for a highly competitive grant from the Center for Disease Control (CDC). Although his application was not approved, the Director, and the program he had created, was generating significant buzz across the city between 2008-2012 and was particularly popular amongst middle class working professionals (namely those who are active proponents of fitness as a lifestyle choice) and the more affluent philanthropist classes of Baltimore.

The Director often spoke highly of how approvingly his friends and colleagues reacted to his idea, and how this program was needed to "create healthier communities" and enact "positive social change" within them. However, with the majority of supporters coming from the social background and experience of white, middle and upper-class privilege, it is important to consider these philanthropic motivations towards lower and working poor African American communities. In one sense, it could be argued that a problem was identified (poorly educated, gang affiliated, violent, unhealthy, and/or directionless urban youth) to which the more affluent middle-upper class was ready and willing to accept, and support, a program that would potentially ameliorate the perceived threat of such "undesirables." As Pitter and Andrews (1997) suggest, "Today's assimilative-reform programs target groups labeled "at-risk youth" and seek funding based more on the need to reduce crime than a need to produce health-conscious model citizens" (pp. 89-90). Nevertheless, and adopting a more diffuse, Foucauldian view of power (see Foucault, 1977, 1980), I would suggest that in fact, such explicitly stated programs of health and fitness intervention also see the production of self-governing, health-conscious citizens as the necessary correction to the perceived pathologies of urban space.

In this sense, the effort is being made to hail underserved black youth, and interpellate them as concrete subjects within disciplinary regimes of health and fitness (Althusser, 1994; Fusco, 2007); the efforts of a predominantly white, educated middle class seeking to monitor, control, and reform them; funded through the "hands-off" philanthropy and charitable donations of an even more privileged, and racially homogenous, upper class (Cole, 1996; King, 2001; Zizek, 2009). This is not to suggest or further reinforce the essentialist understandings of a simplistic dichotomy of white affluent paternalism amidst the perceived pathologies of a black underclass, but rather to acknowledge that the realities of

inequality and oppression in highly segregated urban spaces, while most often viewed in racial terms, are nonetheless experienced primarily through class terms, within the late capitalist conjuncture (Hall, et al., 1979). Indeed, this is why it was so necessary, following works that demonstrate the importance of acknowledging the physical cultural agency of individuals negotiating the socio-spatial conditions of their everyday lives (Atencio & Wright, 2008; Hartmann, 2001; Kelley, 1997a, 1997b; Wacquant, 1992, 1994), to engage the lived experiences of individuals participating in, and being influenced by, the scope of BMoreFit's philanthropic efforts.

In the midst of observing how BMoreFit staff sought to "motivate and guide students to improve their own fitness and to obtain the education and skills necessary to become certified fitness professionals" (BMoreFit program description, 2009), I began organizing my field notes to reflect the various modalities through which students were being instructed and disciplined towards the pursuit of this goal. This process eventually led to the development of three major themes that were identified as disciplinary techniques, or rather, *techniques of corporeal governance*, through which, BMoreFit students were urged to accept the "fitness first" mentality and lifestyle embodied by, and reproduced within, both the BAC space, and the bodies that labored within it. These included *organizational, socio-spatial, and pedagogical techniques of corporeal governance*. While these techniques represent both formal and informal forces acting upon students within the BAC, I will suggest that the specific goals to instill discipline, a hard work ethic, and the kind of "upbeat" attitude, or emotional labor (Bryman, 1999), that is often required of fitness professionals (see chapter 3), encompassed the beliefs BMoreFit organizers were most wont to instill in the minds of their young pupils.

As was the Director's intention, the structure of the program reflected his goal to "prepare students for the real world" in terms of time management, responsibility, and

acting professional in the workplace (Personal Communication, March 2010). Hence, in many ways, BMoreFit sought to do more than just educate underserved youth about fitness and health as a form of job training. Implicit to the strategies of intervention was the desire to inculcate a shift in attitude on the part of students to "accept fitness as a lifestyle choice" as one Faculty member put it (Fieldnotes, July 2010). From my critical interpretive standpoint, I viewed what was happening within the boundaries of the program as the purposeful reformation of young people who were viewed as "at-risk" or otherwise aberrant, and in need of careful guidance, discipline, and training to put them on the "right" path. Of course, stemming from this well-intentioned paternalism was the stark reality that what the faculty, director, and board members considered to be "the right path," for everyone, was in fact, influenced by, and reflective of, their similar experiences of social status, racial privilege (save one African American), and the possession of significant amounts of capital (economic, cultural, social, and physical). In the sections that follow, I seek to interrogate the often subtle, elusive, and contingent techniques of corporeal governance (organizational, socio-spatial, and pedagogical) that were deployed (consciously, but also by chance and circumstance) through the variegated discourses, practices, spatialities, and pedagogies of contemporary neoliberal fitness culture.

Organizational techniques of corporeal governance

> …leaders do not go to the people in order to bring them a message of "salvation," but in order to come to know through dialogue with them both their objective situation and their awareness of that situation—the various levels of perception of themselves and of the world in which and with which they exist. One cannot expect positive results from an educational or political action program which fails to respect the particular view of the world held by the people. Such a program constitutes cultural invasion, good intentions notwithstanding (Freire, 2000, p. 95).

The philanthropist's perspective: BMoreFit as benevolent institution

Perhaps the most obvious forms of corporeal governance observed within BMoreFit involved the overall structure, management, and organization of the program itself. Rules, regulations, enforcement, curriculum, scheduling, and common procedures that mark an "appropriate" form of participation could be discerned from the everyday observation of routine activities. As a project that evolved with shifting identifications and emphases on particular goals—initially claiming a focus on improving the health and employability of "at-risk" youth to counteract recidivism and gang related delinquent behaviors, to a simpler, more widely recognized, and perhaps more fundable project of "reducing childhood obesity"—the formation of the program reflects the perspectives of those organizing it, the issues deemed most important, and the strategies for intervention. Before delving into the manner in which students responded to the conditions of this form of fitness philanthropy (chapter 3), the remainder of this chapter circumscribes the positional particularities of those controlling BMoreFit (director, faculty, and board members), and how their experience and embodiment combined, within the BAC space, to produce a series of overlapping pedagogical archetypes of a middle class, "fitness first" lifestyle, which, as I will suggest, also subtly reinforced the normalization of neoliberal ideals and forms of white privilege.

After visiting the BAC, and meeting with the Director on several occasions to develop trust and a level of comfort, we finally sat down to do a formal interview that would be recorded. In one of my first questions, I asked him how he came up with the idea for BMoreFit and why he wanted to create it. Having previously heard him speak about his background in marketing and advertising, how he came to Baltimore 20 years earlier and had seen the city change dramatically since that time, how he still loved Baltimore despite all its problems, and how fitness had become his life's pursuit, I expected to hear an inspiring story

about how this great idea emerged. In two of our previous conversations, I jotted down notes about how excited and relieved I was to hear him speak passionately about the unequal playing fields with respect to the city's social divisions, and the lack of access to fitness facilities, recreation, fresh healthy foods, and healthcare for much of the city's poor.

Despite his position of relative privilege and power, he spoke of social justice in a manner that eased my anxieties about being in the exclusive BAC space, and amidst a program whose organizers I had wrongly assumed would reflect greater diversity. His political beliefs, and stated social activism as a gay male, concern for rising obesity rates amongst the poor, and general understanding and empathy towards the underprivileged, had convinced me that, despite the apparent markers of privileged whiteness within the club space, the BMoreFit program just might exude an organic and participatory approach to the instruction of underprivileged black youth. Paired with caring adults invested in their success (like the Director), it seemed possible that students might flourish from the opportunities provided to them, regardless of the immediately apparent racial, class, and cultural chasms that existed between them and BMoreFit organizers. Reflecting this genuine concern, the Director often communicated to me his love for Baltimore and his desire to see it thrive:

> I love Baltimore. It's a very real city. I think its very realistic of America and what's going on, on many different levels. And, you know, there's been certain growth in Baltimore and then you just have the pockets of neighborhoods where the socio-economic level is much worse and challenged. And, what's very interesting about Baltimore is *you have a ton of philanthropy here.* And you have a lot of interested organizations who really want to try to make a difference. And that's one of the things that I want to do with BMoreFit and *try to break the divide between the haves and the have-nots and give more of the have-nots and opportunity to live healthier lifestyles* (Director, personal communication, March, 2010)

On other occasions, he revealed his conceptual belief in BMoreFit as an organization capable of making a significant impact in areas of social provision that had been cut by waves of government retrenchment:

> Perfect example is recently the mayor asked to make cuts in the budget and they wanted to really cut a lot of the recreation centers and it was really discouraging because I had partnered with Recs and Parks and I had just met with the head of recs and parks who is a wonderful guy and he was just sharing with me the challenges that they face. And, I want to be able to partner with them and maybe have our graduates from BMoreFit go to some of the rec centers and teach some of the classes. I was appalled by the numbers of classes that they offer, there's just so few of them. So, that combined with the fact that a lot of the schools aren't offering phys ed and its not a surprise that childhood obesity is at an all time high (Director, personal communication, April, 2010)

And lastly, further demonstrating his acknowledgement of the environmental conditions and social determinants impacting the health and nutrition of Baltimore's more impoverished and economically challenged citizens, the director iterated that:

> With the problems that we have with the food industry and people have, you know, what I would call highly processed foods that are not healthy, available to them at every corner, yet when it comes to healthy foods—fruits and vegetables and good sources of protein—they're hard to find; especially in the poorer neighborhoods. And grocery stores aren't even there. So, their going to these mom and pop corner stores and buying processed food as their staple of their diet and its…its, just not a good situation. So, and then that compacted with the lack of fitness and exercise and there aren't playgrounds and there's not phys ed in the schools that we have to really, you know, start to change the way things are being done or its just going to get worse and worse and worse (Director, personal communication, April, 2010)

From these various interviews, it was clear that the Director was no stranger to the realities of Baltimore's impoverished and underserved; recognizing and acknowledging the barriers that different groups in Baltimore face in terms of being physically active and eating healthy. However, as much as he professed an understanding and empathy towards those who are disadvantaged within this context of shifting governmental priorities, cycles of poverty, declining infrastructure, and a marked neglect for the public good, his ideas for combating such conditions did not seem to break far from the dominant, neoliberal inflected, mode of thinking that individualizes responsibility for health, and structures top-down approaches to intervention.

In other words, within a climate of disinvestment and neglect for poor urban communities, the neoliberal inflected health responsibilization strategy (Gray, 2009; Lowenheim, 2007) seems to have become so dominant and normalized that any health interventions deemed worthy of funding, support, and recognition must either reproduce these ideas or risk rejection and marginalization. Individual philanthropists, as a result of their privileged position and experience within society, are also more likely to comply in a manner that reproduces the status quo, and produces programming and policies, that reflect their own experience, values, and lifestyles (King, 2004, 2008; Morvaridi, 2012). They want to help, but perhaps only know how to help by way of relying upon, and thereby reproducing, their own knowledge, experience, and positional circumstance with regard to the forms of intervention. Reflecting the slippery and often contingent articulations of one's positionality, political beliefs, and lived experience (Wise, 2011), I was not prepared for the director's response when I probed further about the challenges he faced during the initial 'pilot' round of the summer training program that involved "at-risk" youth recruited through the Mayor's Office for Employment Development. With an initial degree of hesitation, which nonetheless dissipated, as he seemed wont to share with me his broader perspective on conditions in Baltimore that made the pilot program so challenging, the Director suggested that,

> …[in Baltimore] you're dealing with a lot of uneducated communities that just don't get it, and they're lazy and they're drug addicted, and the poverty levels are such that they're just not proactive enough… a lot of them are knowledgeable but *they're knowledgeable in working the system*. And, we need to—we being government and community members—need to revamp the system because it's broken…I had one of my students who had a baby during the program and she can't even take care of herself, let alone a child. And our system rewards her and gives her more money for having this child. That's where some of the inadequacies exist. And I don't know how you fix it…One of the beautiful things about fitness is *it can be done for free*. And *people can take it into their own hands to improve themselves* from a health standpoint and

> if we were more preventive in doing so, we'd save lots and lots of healthcare dollars by doing it" (BMoreFit Director, personal interview, April 2010)

In this moment, it felt as if the Director had broken character, moving from the more critically reflexive and thoughtful responses to previous questions—sentiments that had communicated to me a sensitivity to, and awareness of, the social determinants of health and their impact on poor communities—to a more free flowing conversation, in which, he was willing to vent his frustrations over the students in the program who nonetheless, represented these same communities of which we had previously spoken.

Clearly discouraged by the fact that his initial pilot program in 2009 had not been as successful as expected, I found it interesting that the Director attributed this failure to the "significant behavioral problems" on the part of students, rather than anything to do with the program itself. In my mind, and from my observations of occasional student discontent during the 2010 program (see chapter 3), this reasoning signaled a disconnect in terms of understanding the conditions urban youth face, and being adequately prepared to engage and educate young people that have been the victims of systemic neglect and abuse (Cooper, 2009; Giroux, 2003). Further, the Director's comments suggest the presence of several assumptions I found to be common across my interactions with other privileged white adults occupying positions of power and influence within public and private agencies staking a claim in matters of youth development and/or reformation. Namely, these include the Director's ardent ideas that:

1. Fitness does not discriminate. Anybody can decide to do it. Fitness is free.
2. If everybody took personal responsibility for their own health, our healthcare system would be better and we would be less in debt as a result of preventable diseases caused by lifestyle choices.

3. Social welfarism is, in part, responsible for laziness, drug addiction, and dependence that subsequently prevent people from taking the initiative to improve their own health.
4. Government is broken and needs to be fixed by concerned citizens
5. Poor, uneducated communities in Baltimore are not proactive enough in working towards better health and need guidance.

Given these sentiments, as deduced from the Director's comments, it also became possible to interpret the particular formation of the program, as an outgrowth of these fundamental ideas, concerning the health of poor urban populations, and the most "appropriate" way of reforming their health and lifestyle. In as much as students from the 'pilot' round were recruited through a partnership with the Baltimore Mayor's Office of Employment Development, the Director organized the program to resemble an internship opportunity by which students would be paid an hourly wage for their participation. These students ranged from 18-24 years old, and were either high school dropouts, unemployed, and/or had been floating in and out of the criminal justice system. While unable to observe the "pilot" round of the 2009 summer training program, I can only infer from what the Director, faculty members, and students told me after I had become a part of the organization in late 2009.

After learning that BMoreFit would no longer recruit from local government agencies, and instead would seek younger recruits from local high schools, I sought to understand the underlying causes for this programmatic shift. Each time I inquired however, I received a fairly consistent response, from the director, board members, and faculty that highlighted the "behavioral problems" of the students as the key reason the 'pilot' program was not as successful as desired. In fact, aside from the occasional reference to "limited resources" or "budgetary concerns", it seemed unanimous that BMoreFit should

recruit younger kids who were still in school and could be required to demonstrate a higher aptitude and motivation for excelling within a rigorous schedule of instruction and hands-on learning. In other words, it seemed that the "at-risk" youth posed too many problems for faculty, who cited students' "lack of discipline" as a significant barrier to the pace of learning and progress that was expected. These difficulties, and the solutions proposed as a result, are further reflected in the following comments from the director:

> I've found that working with the at-risk youth was just very, very challenging and time consuming, and energy draining. Because it really became part of my mission to, you know, work with these at-risk youth which was part of it, but I wanted it to have more of a positive impact on creating healthier change in the communities and working with the at-risk youth, it really became about working with them and trying to get them to succeed in *something*. And, I had no idea how "at-risk" the population was and how many issues that they face every day. And I just wasn't prepared for it, on a level *to really make the change that I wanted to make*. So, the course of action has changed a bit where our board of directors decided, "lets keep doing what were doing but try to focus on more of a global initiative of reducing childhood obesity" and still focus on the urban youth, and training urban youth who, not necessarily would be getting into gangs but, could create more of a positive outcome in creating healthier communities. So, I'm in the process of recruiting another pilot group of students, a dozen students to become group fitness instructors and then go out and partner with different community organizations, churches…to offer classes to try and create healthier communities. So, you know, we could probably do a part two of this and a part three of this as our pilot program goes into action. It's going to be a six-week intensive program through the Mayor's office of employment development, again through their summer youth works program. So, they will actually pay the students to go through the program and then hopefully I can get partners to place the students in jobs to give them some income in their Junior and Senior years to teach classes (Director, personal communication, April, 2010)

Importantly, this comment reveals the detached, yet nonetheless highly influential role played by the Board of Directors in determining organizational focus and programmatic guidelines. Quite simply, because of students' "significant behavioral issues" and the less than adequate results from the 'pilot' summer training program, the Board urged the Director to recruit younger participants from local high schools. The rationale was that

younger participants who were still in school would more easily absorb the material being taught and be more likely to embrace the broader mission of BMoreFit to create healthy change through their own community-based efforts. It was thought that these students would be less likely to rebel, more willing to comply, and more likely to succeed in helping BMoreFit achieve their ultimate goal of improving the health of Baltimore's poorest, unhealthiest, and most underserved communities through educational training.

Subsequently, the process of recruiting students would also change through the use of an application process whereby only the most promising students would be selected for participation. BMoreFit would also refine their policies for "behavioral decorum" and treat students more like professional employees who would be expected to carry themselves in the same manner as if they were already working in the fitness industry. It was made clear that students would be expected to follow specific rules and regulations that resembled "real-world employment" and would prepare them to work in the industry. As such, students were required to:

1. Clock in and out each day, keeping track of their hours in the facility

2. Show up to work on time, dressed appropriately, and prepared for the day's events

3. Show respect to the Director, faculty, and other students by listening attentively, raising their hand to ask questions, and being a positive "team player"

4. Participate in all scheduled activities

5. Notify the Director in advance of any extenuating circumstances that would result in students' absence or tardiness.

6. Conduct themselves with dignity and respect, which included a zero-tolerance policy on fighting, hitting, verbal harassment, or any other form of negative social interaction.

7. Put forth 100% effort in being a positive minded, active, and engaged member of the BMoreFit team.

Further, if students failed to comply with the program regulations, they could be issued both verbal and/or written warnings (depending on the severity and/or number of offenses committed) that could affect their participation. Indeed, the Director made it clear that he reserved the right to expel any student for poor behavior, absenteeism, tardiness, or lack of effort. While no students were expelled during the 2010 program, a few warnings were issued and the threat of these disciplinary measures was employed periodically to remind students to stay on task, and/or "get with the program," as I heard one faculty member loudly proclaim. The expectations and disciplinary structure of the program functioned to maintain the kind of decorum expected of individuals entering the health club and provide the guidelines through which students would be consistently reminded of their obligations as participants receiving a specialized form of educational fitness training. As such, students' participation in BMoreFit was always contingent upon their exhibition of "appropriate behavior" and compliance with program rules and regulations.

A brief pause for self-reflexive disclaimers

Before delving further into the socio-spatial and pedagogical techniques of BMoreFit's corporeal governance, I must address nature of the data collection process, my role within BMoreFit, and the context of shared interaction. More specifically, I want to first make clear that my purpose in revealing potentially incendiary and politicized comments is not to cast judgments about the individuals I met, spoke with, and worked with, during my fieldwork. I can say with all confidence that every single person I met from BMoreFit, and other organizations affiliated with BMoreFit (Recs & Parks, Safe & Sound, Playworks, etc.), had good intentions to positively impact the health of Baltimore, and were particularly concerned about the future of the city's young people. At a glance, most onlookers would

likely determine that these are decent people, giving freely of their time and money to intervene in complex social problems that have festered as a result of waves of public retrenchment and "roll-back" neoliberalization (Peck & Tickell, 2002). Operating from within ideological frameworks reflective of their privileged socialization however, their perspectives, values, and beliefs often ran contrary to those of the students recruited into the program. In seeing both the empowering possibilities and delimiting impositions of the BMoreFit program, the progressive intentions and misguided assumptions of program organizers, I became more aware of how truly complicated we all are in terms of our positional identifications (Essed, 1994; Wise, 2011), and the degree to which lived experience and material circumstance impact how we make sense of the world.

By viewing the philanthropic enterprise from a critical perspective, I was compelled to interrogate what I heard, saw, and experienced with specific individuals, as being reflective of their situated-ness within structures upon which regressive ideologies, beliefs, and discourses are (un)consciously built and maintained; specifically, white privilege, racial and economic inequality, and neoliberal healthism. In other words, I was unprepared for the kinds of things that I heard some people say, particularly about poor urban populations, and with respect to debates about health, fitness, lifestyle, responsibility, and governance. In addition to deconstructing and interpreting the meanings of these conversations, I also found it important to consider how I became privy to such information in the first place. In fact, the impetus to pursue auto/ethnography and self-reflexive writing (see chapter four) to represent my field experiences was linked to the frequency with which I heard comments that strongly conflicted with my own beliefs. And yet, the person making the utterance, whether directed to me personally, or made within conscious earshot, seemed to make it in

such a confident manner that I began questioning my role within the organization and why I was assumed to be of the same accord as BMoreFit organizers.

While I initially experienced a feeling of excitement for collecting, what felt like more meaningful and true to life data, given its controversial nature, I also realized that my subject position (young white heterosexual male) and cultural capital (a former personal trainer and University of Maryland Kinesiology graduate) was, through my engaged participation in the BAC space, combining in such a way as to mark me as a 'safe' ally, program supporter, and fitness colleague. Through my efforts to develop rapport and justify my presence within the BAC, as a part of BMoreFit, I unintentionally became co-opted as another "fitness philanthropist" in terms of those utilizing their knowledge, and various forms of capital, to advocate for healthy change amongst underserved populations.

At times, I felt sorely conflicted following the collection and interpretation of data; particular moments of observed speech and action that caused both alarm and discomfort, even though they are quite common and taken for granted expressions of class privilege, colorblind race talk, and neoliberal ideology. The fact that I was sometimes read as someone who would agree with such sentiments was the terribly difficult part for me to negotiate however. Able to easily play the role of a personal trainer, I could not control how others perceived me and made assumptions that connected my background in fitness with my current role as a researcher and participant observer within BMoreFit. I also did not feel it a good idea to expose my critical sensibilities in order to help others better manage their own speech and behaviors, which would likely have amounted to a degree of silence, an unwillingness to be interviewed, and/or carefully scripted interactions with me, to avoid controversy.

Returning to my conversation with the Director, it was in such moments of brutal honesty that I became more fully aware, and self-conscious of, how my privileged normative subject position (young heterosexual, college educated, white male) and cultural capital (former personal trainer and fitness/health knowledge) might have influenced how certain individuals perceived me, and how they spoke with me. Had the Director, Faculty, or Board members known about my multicultural working class experience, graduate training in critical theories, radical political beliefs, and feminist communitarian epistemology, they might have modified their responses, language, and behavior to avoid the possibility of exposure or critique. However, while I did not purposely mislead anyone about who I was and what my intentions were, I also did not volunteer personal information about myself unless I was asked. Rarely, if ever, was I asked personal questions of that nature; most conversations were based either around the banalities of everyday life in Baltimore, or some topic regarding fitness, exercise, and health.

Thus, while I did not seek to "dig up dirt" by way of subterfuge to expose the subtle colorblind racisms, neoliberal tropes, or misguided paternalistic beliefs that I inevitably encountered, I found myself being *thrown* directly into such encounters (Newman, 2011). Gradually, this led me to seriously consider and reflect on how my own privileged whiteness (layered with educational privilege, and status as a "fellow" fitness trainer and health conscious citizen) was facilitating an unearned level of trust and comfort so easily afforded to me. For example, not once was I challenged on, or even politely questioned about, my credentials as a former personal trainer. My word was enough. Not once was I asked to prove my relationship to the University, or make explicit why I wanted to do research that entailed an engagement with people in BMoreFit. The fact that I so effortlessly and seamlessly ingratiated myself into the workings of the program speaks to the tacit

understandings and assumptions emanating from the symbiosis of white privilege, educational capital, and the embodied performance of middle class sensibilities (Lipsitz, 2006; McDonald, 2005).

As a participant observer, I became more aware of how my embodied performances (influenced by my fitness experience and education) were implicated in the broader reproduction of middle class fitness and health ideals and assumptions that I was desirous to disrupt (Giardina & Newman, 2011). As such, it became necessary to more fully locate myself within these processes, which I accomplish more fully in chapter four. Furthermore, the familiar and fluid process of managing my own embodiment within health club spaces (harkening back to my personal trainer days), also opened my eyes to the fact that BMoreFit students were likewise deploying a similar form of "emotional labor" (Bryman, 1999) that functioned to keep BMoreFit and BAC gatekeepers happy with students' effort and behavioral decorum. In other words, the ways in which I used my physical body to communicate my understanding of, and compliance with, dominant codes and conventions of exercise culture represents a performative act through which I legitimated my presence within BMoreFit (Giardina & Newman, 2011; Frew & McGillivray, 2005). For students, their embodied performances of learned exercise etiquette and behavior for example, served not only to demonstrate their adherence to BMoreFit pedagogy (despite being culturally unfamiliar and occasionally contradictory) but also signaled their compliance to program regulations that had made participation provisional and performance-based. Thus, within the BAC space, embodied performances of "proper" physicality—those linked to unwritten codes of conduct within exclusive spaces of fitness and exercise culture—were highly valued as markers of physical and cultural capital, and indicators of future success.

> It is not our role to speak to the people about our own view of the world, nor to attempt to impose that view on them, but rather to dialogue with the people about their view and ours. We must realize that their view of the world, manifested variously in their action, reflects their *situation* in the world. Educational and political action, which is not critically aware of this situation, runs the risk either of "banking" or preaching in the desert (Freire, 2000, p. 96).

Embodying privilege in sanitized spaces of fitness culture

As a socially constructed space of physical cultural practice, the health club stands as a key site through which ideas about fitness and exercise are (re)produced. Unsurprisingly, it is also common for health clubs to be located primarily within reach of middle class communities where there exists a more vibrant economic infrastructure and built environment conducive to both consumerism and health. For those fortunate enough to gain access to such privatized spaces of fitness, and possess the financial capital to participate in activities of self-betterment, the knowledge and experience gained from pursuing a physically active lifestyle can be a potentially empowering source of self-actualization. However, for those lacking such resources, within a neoliberalizing American culture and economy, the inability to participate further distances the underserved from the economic, social, and cultural mainstream, thereby rendering such populations disposable (Giroux, 2006a, 2009, 2012), except when selectively targeted by the efforts of concerned philanthropists. As such, when the underserved are approached with charitable programming, it is almost always on the terms of the giver, within spaces that they designate, and with which, they are also familiar and comfortable.

Without engaging in dialogue with the people one seeks to assist, the decision to instruct, reform, and educate the underserved often amounts to cultural assimilation, or

rather, the imposition of particular preferences, tastes, and values that reflect the common experiences of a privileged, and often white, middle class lifestyle (Bourdieu, 1984; Byrne, 2009; Endres & Gould, 2009). With respect to health and fitness, the lifestyle practices of this particular group have become mobilized, pedagogically, to supposedly rescue, fix, or reform those who, according to neoliberal (fitness) culture, have failed to do their part and are in need of correction, instruction, and discipline. Thus, the particular spaces in which fitness and exercise practice occur—where the norms for embodied conduct are dialogically (re)produced through the evaluative gaze of moral self-discipline—must also be considered a technique of governance through which, the dominant ideologies of neoliberal fitness culture are brought to bare upon those provisionally invited into the space, as the recipients of charity (Fusco, 2005, 2007).

In contemplating the significance of fitness culture and the modern spaces that facilitate its economic and social viability, one must question how the design of health club space is dialectically linked to particular behavioral norms, fitness practices, and embodied lifestyles. More specifically, I am concerned with the interconnections between the *act* of fitness philanthropy, the *space* within which the act occurs, and the various *forms* of privilege that are often embodied by those participating in such an endeavor (economic, racial, political, and social). In other words, I want to provide a sketch of the privileged bodies within this empirical site (including the director, board of directors, faculty and club members) in order to illuminate the interconnections between privilege, status, power, and the moralization of embodied health (White, Young, & Gillet, 1995), before delving into how the students themselves negotiated these discourses, practices, and embodied activities. As such, and in order to provide further context to my interpretations of those participating in, or otherwise playing a role in, BMoreFit, whether as *givers*, *receivers*, or *observers* (BAC

patrons, local media, or 'friends' of the program), it is worth discussing some scholarly ideas pertaining to spatial dynamics, class privilege and reproduction, and the embodied performance of social status within exclusive spaces of fitness.

Policing the boundaries of the BAC: Health clubs and embodied politics

As a longtime observer and participant within fitness and exercise culture, it is my contention that the gym space can be considered a field of cultural (re)production wherein contextually specific meanings and values frame ideals about the body and its use. As Bourdieu & Wacquant (1992) suggest, fields are "relational configurations" that structure positions of power and influence, generate hierarchies of social value, and set the parameters of common belief amongst members who "constantly work to differentiate themselves from their closest rivals in order to reduce competition" (p. 100) and legitimate their status within the field (see also, Bourdieu, 1984; DeFrance, 1995). Thus, within health club spaces, where the increasing aestheticization of everyday life reproduces an ocularcentric culture of the body (Featherstone, 1991; Rojek, 1995; Virilio, 2002), members and employees engage in "appropriate" forms of bodywork out of a desire for the attainment of physical capital within a specific field of fitness culture (Dworkin and Wachs, 2009; White, et al, 1995).

While Pierre Bourdieu discussed three primary forms of capital (economic, social, and cultural), the notion of physical capital, or the capacity of the body to differentiate itself from other bodies in the field through the performance of physical movement practices, is particularly relevant here (Bourdieu, 1984, 1986; Frew & McGillivray, 2005; Shilling, 1993, 2003). Further, Bourdieu (1984, 1986) believed that the amount of capital one possesses, how forms of capital are valued within the field, and how these relative values might change over time, all help to constitute space within a given field of social relations. The ever highly

esteemed pursuit of physical capital as a value sign within the larger positional and symbolic economy reflects our contemporary moment of neoliberalizing fitness and exercise culture. It also means that those lacking the time, resources, or capacity to also pursue physical capital are often devalued as "carnivalesque" bodies lacking discipline and moral fortitude (Frew & McGillivray, 2005).

In as much as program faculty policed the boundaries of "good" and "bad" bodies according to their size, shape, and fitness level, such practices of bodily evaluation reflect the propensity of individuals to engage in the "gaze." In what Frew & McGillivray (2005) call "open referential gazing" with respect to the evaluation of bodies and their comparative social value, they suggest that, "The health and fitness club is a space where physical capital is not only constructed and celebrated but also undergoes a willing ocular consumption (Featherstone, 1991). In this space, gazing upon the body, scanning its taut curves and contours, is an accepted practice" (p. 166). Further, it is both the architectural design of the health club, and the social construction of its space, that lends itself to the accepted and normalized practice of gazing upon the self, and other bodies, in a manner of conspicuous surveillance, evaluation, and comparison. In an attempt to represent my observations of the BAC space, I recorded the following reflection in my field notes as I sat alone following a day of observation:

Reflections of the BAC health club space (July 14, 2010)

> Open, sterile, sanitized spaces. Bright lights. Walls lined with mirrors. The faint smell of intermingling odors; pungent sweat and Co2, industrial strength cleaning products, perspiring, odoriferous bodies. The sounds of physical exertion and activity, of bodies in motion, reverberate through each corridor I pass. Certain spaces are separated by physical borders, assigned particular meanings and prescribed "appropriate" uses. There is a space for cardiovascular training; a large open room near the entrance, lined with elliptical machines, treadmills, stair climbers, and bicycles, arranged and organized ever so neatly to maximize space and aesthetic value. Weight training machines require another section, cordoned off from the aerobic

> pursuits of the oxidative physiological process in the cardio section, yet still reflective of the control and limited degrees of freedom imposed upon the body's movement by the machine's design. Even further distanced from the glowing radiance of the massive cardio training and machine weight area, is the free weight area; a space often associated with men's pursuit of bigger muscles. Such gendered, and gendering, spaces of the health club encompass a significant, yet often taken for granted, axis of embodied social differentiation. And yet, free weight training arguably provides the most effective modality through which to both build or tone muscles, offering a more complete range of motion and recruitment of stabilizer muscles. Further still, the health club reflects the social class habitus of its patrons. A membership here costs about $80 a month. A quick glance at the rows of vehicles resting in the parking lot, awaiting the sweaty return of their owners, suggests that, for these individuals, $80 a month is of little consequence when it comes to one's health. Amongst this contingent, a common belief can be witnessed, seen, and sometimes heard; "Fitness is a lifestyle." "Fitness is free." A fit body can be chosen, worked for, and achieved through the "right" effort. The logic is simple. It confirms and reflects medical authority. It bestows moral value upon those who heed its call. Participation in fitness and exercise cultures, both within, and outside of, the contemporary health club, requires that the sovereign individual police themselves and their behavior according to established guidelines. The bodies that enter therein follow strictly, the guidelines for "intended use," heeding the strategically placed equipment warnings, along with health club policies delineating "proper" use, including when, and for how long, an individual can use fitness equipment or space. There are also unwritten rules concerning gym "etiquette" and behavior. These boundaries of "right" conduct are most powerfully, and frequently, policed by the very bodies which routinely visit the health club space. Thus, in as much as space is socially constructed, it stands to follow that powerful groups attempt to control the meanings assigned to certain spaces for their benefit.

Reflecting upon this entry, I remember sitting in the lounge area following a long, uneventful day of observation, thinking through what I had seen, felt, and heard within the BAC. In the process of jotting down notes and ideas concerning the disciplinary nature of the BAC space however, I began to more fully consider the impact of spatial design on the facilitation of corporeal evaluation and judgment—walls lined with oversized mirrors, clear glass wall barriers, large open spaces, and the presence of personal trainers, all contributing to the normalcy of bodily appraisal. It is through these technologies of surveillance that bodies are labeled, defined, and judged according to particular criteria of "appropriate"

behavior. Within spaces subjected to normative power relations of gender, race, sexuality, and class, it follows that hegemonic spatial relations would have a significant impact on marginalized and underserved youth targeted by health reformation initiatives (Hall, Coffey, & Williamson, 1999). On more than one occasion, I witnessed a look of surprise, or concern, on the faces of some BAC patrons who, upon seeing groups of BMoreFit students within the BAC, engaged in what I perceived as a moral evaluation of their performance, presence, and position as recipients of BMoreFit charity. In particular, such glances often attended moments when students did something perceived to be "inappropriate" according to the unwritten rules of gym etiquette and exercise culture. For example, one day while packing up my things in the lounge area near the front desk, I overheard a middle aged white female club member complain to the front desk staff that, "the kids here in this be fit program, I think its great but can they not hang out over here anymore [motioning towards the squash observation area]…its just too crowded and noisy." On another occasion, and while entering the locker room to use the facilities, I heard two male club members complaining about how some of the weight training equipment was not being put away properly:

> Man 1: "…I just don't get why you can't take two seconds to put it back. If you're that lazy, you shouldn't even be in the gym"
>
> Man 2: "probably one of those kids they're training over there, you think?"
>
> Man 1: "yea, wouldn't be surprised, I bet it was"
>
> Man 2: maybe they can teach 'em that on day one next time [laughing] …

While not an explicitly racist evaluation of students' presence in the BAC space, although the assumption of laziness attributed to the students is troubling, such comments did speak to the subtle nuances of cultural and class difference, and the kind of misunderstandings that

can, and often do, exist between severely polarized groups. The fact that the two men did not actually see a BMoreFit student leaving his or her weights out, but nevertheless, assumed that it must have been one of "them," is a telling, and potentially problematic, reflection of a privileged mindset that so quickly, and with unsubstantiated certainty, associates a so-called act of deviance with underserved African American youth in this otherwise wealthy, white, and exclusive space.

With regard to the complaining woman, it was my experience that people of all sizes, ages, shapes, and colors enjoyed socializing in the squash area because of its sizable openness, location, and scenery. This was the only time I observed someone essentially complaining about loitering in this area, so it is difficult to interpret the woman's actions with confidence. However, the zeal of her protest, and the frustration in her voice, suggested to me that the mere presence of BMoreFit students in the BAC was sometimes viewed with suspicion and contempt. In moments where it was determined that students were not behaving "appropriately" in the BAC space, the director or an acting faculty member would attempt to correct them (publically at times), both to reassure BAC patrons with the spectacle of control, and to reiterate the kind of behavior expected of students.

In fact, it seemed that the firm emphasis placed on gym etiquette, positive attitude, and being a team player was rooted in concerns over the presence of supposedly undisciplined black youth who, without the careful oversight of BMoreFit staff, might pose a threat to the order and security of the BAC space. As such, faculty constantly policed these socially constructed boundaries and attempted to mitigate such concerns by effectively serving as mediators between BMoreFit students and BAC patrons. In this sense, the sight of order, discipline, and respect for authority was given high priority, along with the goal to impress any and all onlookers as to the transformative powers of fitness which, it was

believed, could radically alter the behavior, attitude, and lifestyles of even these, once delinquent and underserved black youth. The director and faculty thus worked tirelessly to instill in students, the aspirations of fitness as "an entire way of life" which, from their perspective, meant accepting and reproducing the kinds of values, ideals, and practices, reflective of mainstream fitness culture. In this sense, their embodied performances not only functioned as 'aspirational texts' (Frew & McGillivray, 2005), to provide students with what they perceived to be, a template for healthy living, but also served to normalize a particular bodily aesthetic, and behavioral decorum, deemed appropriate within elitist spaces of fitness and health like the BAC.

Furthermore, Frew & McGillivray (2005) suggest that the, "health and fitness club is the principal space where the quest for, and attainment of, physical capital takes place. It operates as a space where the promotion of a particular aesthetic comes together with regimented body work (Shilling, 1993; Hancock & Tyler, 2000) to form a moral reminder of the need for self-regulation" (p. 162). For the fitness professionals involved in BMoreFit, routine bodywork, self-regulation, and ocularcentric evaluation are the normalized, taken for granted, aspects of their everyday lifestyle habitus (White, et al, 1995). As a system of seemingly natural, but actually socially learned preferences, tastes, values, and beliefs, the concept of habitus helps to demarcate the relations between particular class groupings and the dominant practices and dispositions that constitute a particular lifestyle within a common field (Bourdieu, 1984). In other words, these individuals embody their lifestyle habitus through how they think about, speak about, and act upon, practices of fitness and health, which also bestows various forms of capital upon them through their embodied activity (Frew & McGillivray, 2005; White, et al, 1995). For example, personal trainers often showcase their "physical capital superiority" through the clothing they wear (tank tops, tight

clothing, midriffs, etc.), which often reveals or accentuates body shape, firmness, and muscularity associated with peak physical condition, and idealized images of desirable bodies within media culture (Dworkin & Wachs, 2009; Frew & McGillivray, 2005). When performing an exercise or movement in front of students, the confident body language, posture, and ease with which faculty performed grueling physical activities also bestowed physical capital. Within mainstream American fitness culture then, and certainly within the BAC space, BMoreFit faculty and BAC trainers, represented,

> "a material expression or 'medium through which the (health and fitness club) is itself personified' (Tyler and Abbott, 1998, p. 441). Their bodies are referential texts or marketing mediums to be read…they are the physical manifestations of the idealized classical body (Featherstone, 1991), being fat free, toned and in proportion, qualities synonymous with purity and success" (Bordo, 1993; Shilling, 1993; quoted in Frew & McGillivray, 2005, p. 171).

Such presentations and performances of the body are also congruent with Frew and McGivillray's (2005) notion that, "in the social space of the health and fitness club, the 'toned, ordered and visible body' is the desired form of physical capital" (p. 162), which carries the potential to "enhance one's social and moral worth (Hughes, 2000, p. 21, quoted in Frew & McGivillray, 2005, p. 162). And indeed, for club members, other fitness professionals, and the BMoreFit Board, such displays of superior physical capital were often met with adoration, praise, and respect. For students however, the particular forms of physical capital being promoted within this space were occasionally challenged and rejected on the basis of differing cultural values with respect to the appearance of the body (see chapter three).

Pedagogical techniques of corporal governance

> The man or woman who proclaims devotion to the cause of liberation yet is unable to enter into *communion* with the people, whom he or she continues to

> regard as totally ignorant, is grievously self-deceived. The convert who approaches the people but feels alarm at each step they take, each doubt they express, and each suggestion they offer, and attempts to impose his "status," remains nostalgic towards his origins (Freire, 2000, p. 61).

The personal trainer as pedagogue: Healthy living as lifestyle choice

Given the purpose of BMoreFit to "educate urban youth about the transformative powers of fitness" (BMoreFit Director, April, 2010), the formation of the program reflected the impetus to change the way students thought about, and acted upon, the knowledge and skills they were receiving with regard to their own health and the health of family, friends, and their communities. If they were ever to become "fitness ambassadors" as the director had intended, this would mean accepting, absorbing, and reproducing wholeheartedly, the very same values and logics of bodily health held by BMoreFit authorities. This purposeful expectation was meant to prepare students to carry the message of fitness and the importance of a healthy lifestyle, back to their own communities. By demonstrating their own personal transformation and success, it was believed that this would inspire others to follow suit. Again, without an adequate process of dialogic interaction to assess students' perspectives on this strategy of intervention however, the program proceeded without consideration of how students might feel about returning to their communities in a manner of health proselytization: particularly since the healthy lifestyle messages of BMoreFit are more reflective of white middle class experience and privilege.

In terms of identifying the particular pedagogies of BMoreFit, I found that nearly every topic of fitness covered by faculty and the director was imbued with a subtle yet consistent underpinning of neoliberal values and ideals. For example, in addition to the embodied performances of BAC trainers and BMoreFit faculty (pedagogical texts in of themselves), another key aspect through which faculty attempted to embed a "fitness first

mindset" in students was through how they spoke about fitness and health, specifically the role it plays in their own life, and their personal opinions concerning how, and why, others need to be actively engaged in fitness practices as an individual duty of citizenship (Cheek, 2008; Crawford, 1980):

> "I have to get my daily workout in or I feel terrible. Fitness is my life"
>
> (Claude, BMoreFit Faculty)

> "nobody can do it for you. Being fit…all it takes is effort, and if you make it routine, it becomes a part of you"
>
> (Kelly, BMoreFit Faculty)

> "I love to workout. There's nothing else like it. The feeling I get physically and mentally is intoxicating. Everybody needs this"
>
> (Mike, BAC Trainer)

> "I've just made it part of my life. It makes me happy and I couldn't imagine life without it. Nothing can keep me from it"
>
> (Danny, BMoreFit Faculty)

These were informal pedagogies of fitness (outside the official rhetoric and instruction of exercise training sessions) that can be considered very powerful because they represented personal stories of success and achievement through corporeal discipline and bodywork (White, et al, 1995). The fact that such pronouncements could be supported by the immediately visible and verifiable proof of their fit bodies provided compelling support to the uncritical trope that fitness is a lifestyle choice and not an outcome of circumstance or environment (Howell & Ingham, 2001; Roy, 2008). However, because BMoreFit faculty and BAC trainers had not experienced the kind of health barriers that result from intense racial segregation, poverty, and lack of access to resources for healthy living (Thomas, et al, 2011; Williams & Collins, 2001), their uncritical appeals to individual fitness as a simple cure all proved problematic when directed at BMoreFit students (see chapter 3).

As a seemingly engrained disposition borne out of individual effort, sacrifice, and self-discipline, such an unwavering way of thinking about fitness as essential to life and happiness, is articulated to other aspects of identity (politics, spiritual/religious beliefs, moral values, social position, individual worth) that influence one's perception of others who do not share similar views. Subsequently, it is conceivable how such an outlook (a neoliberal fitness first mentality), and perhaps compounded by identity politics and personal beliefs, could extend into judgments about those who are not "doing their part" by disciplining their own bodies (Frew & McGillivray, 2005; White, et al, 1995). While BMoreFit Faculty and BAC trainers were careful not to expose too much of their personal frustrations with people they perceived to be lazy and/or unhealthy, I have found in my own experience, working in health clubs and other spaces of fitness practice, that condemning the overweight or obese as being lazy and undisciplined is a very common occurrence behind closed doors and/or amongst other fit bodies and like minded individuals (see also, personal reflections in chapter four). Such conversations serve to reinforce boundaries and inscribe norms that perpetuate misunderstanding, prejudice, and a lack of concern for context and circumstance (Gard & Wright, 2005; Jutel, 2005; Sykes & McPhail, 2008). In addition to the comments of BAC trainers and BMoreFit faculty members recorded in my field notes, the following are statements I have heard fitness professionals utter, which I suggest are quite representative of the neoliberal healthism underpinning fitness and health professions in general, and organizations like BMoreFit in particular:

> "If more people took it into their own hands to be healthier, change bad habits and improve how they live, lifestyle and all, think how much stronger the economy would be, how strong our country would be"
>
> (Claude, BMoreFit Faculty)

> "There's a lot of unhealthy, overweight, people out there. They need direction. But nobody can make them exercise. End of the day, it falls on each person to do their part"
>
> (Danny, BMoreFit Faculty)

> "Come on…just a few more reps. I know you aint quittin now. Only lazy people give up. I know you don't wanna look like them"
>
> (Planet Fitness Personal Trainer)

> "I just don't get it, you know. This lady was so huge. I mean, barely able to walk…but she's pushing a cart full of junk food and pre-packaged meals, chips, and soda…"
>
> (Gold's Gym Manager)

> "A lot of people are just lazy. You see em out here everyday doing just enough to get by but, its like, all you have to do is go for a jog or even walk or something. I mean, just do something active for your own health!"
>
> (Gold's Gym Personal Trainer)

> "I just wish people would stop making excuses for why they cant exercise. You don't need a gym and fancy equipment or clothing, or anything like that. You just need the determination"
>
> (University of Maryland Recreation Center Trainer)

Such perspectives reflect the manner in which stigmatized bodies (overweight, obese, unhealthy) are often discussed as being failures, worthy of their fate and undeserving of empathy (Crawford, 1977), not only because they visibly disrupt normative ideals and expectations, but because they are perceived to have let it happen to themselves through a lack of effort (Duncan, 2008; Sykes & McPhail, 2008). Justifications for the demonization of fatness are thus implicated within, and articulated to, neoliberal ideals about self-reliance and personal responsibility. As such, for those whose body conforms to the dominant norms of idealized physicality (either due to individual effort or simply good genetics), or are actively working towards the achievement of a "better" body, it is the willingness to participate in the reproduction of such practices (activities of self-betterment) and discourses (fat-phobic and/or judgmental), that bestows social value, worth, and distinction (Bourdieu, 1984;

Williams, 1995). Consequently, for those perceived to be doing nothing about their health, they are often discursively framed as the justifiable targets of moral indignation, scapegoats for rising health care costs, and the embodied symbols of American excess, gluttony, and weakness (Duncan, 2008; Monaghan, 2005; Smith, 1990). Such individuals are portrayed as having failed in their responsibilities to themselves and to the broader symbolic health of the nation, and as such, are undeserving of assistance, understanding, or respect.

Further, since the achievement of "good health" or at least, the appearance of such (i.e., a muscular yet toned body), bestows perceptions of moral fortitude and work ethic, ideas about good health have been powerfully articulated to individual characteristics and behavioral choices (White, et al, 1995). The trajectories of "fat-phobia" (Sykes & McPhail, 2008) in American society also intersect with regressive discourses about affirmative action, social welfare, and reproductive rights as well (Shaw, 2005). Given my years of experience as a personal trainer, I assert that such comments, even if well-intentioned as a motivating force for better health, nonetheless serves to reify the regressive and limiting definitions of an idealized corporeality, further normalizing the individual responsibility mantra of neoliberal healthism which fitness culture so readily upholds (Cheek, 2008; Crawford, 1980).

Subsequently, the health of urban populations, and the broader perception of them, becomes particularly problematic when stigmas of 'sizism' (Brown & Rothblum, 1989) become "enmeshed with sexism, and other prejudices" (Monaghan, 2008, p. 101), including racism. Rather than acknowledge how health is interconnected to the persistent impacts of structural racism and the highly polarized built environment of American cities (Wacquant, 2007, 2009; Wacquant & Wilson, 1989; Williams & Collins, 2001), poor health outcomes are often rationalized with colorblind rhetoric which, for white people, conveniently erases history and ignores social structure in favor of individual explanations. Subsequently, within

the social constructions of, and investments in, whiteness and its discourses (Feagin, 2006, 2010, 2013; Lipsitz, 2006; Nakayama & Martin, 1998; Omi & Winant, 1994), the functioning of white privilege in the context of health and fitness serves to reinforce a racial divide by articulating dominant health and fitness practices with the lifestyles of middle class whites. Conversely, unhealthy lifestyle behaviors and poor health outcomes, while statistically prevalent in urban communities, thus become articulated to a perceived essentialism of natural black pathology, rather than the outcomes of class inequities, systemic racism, and environmental conditions.

Colorblind fitness?: (Soft) Racial framing and philanthro-colonialist ambitions

> Precisely because identities are constructed within, not outside of discourse, we need to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional, sites within specific discursive formations and practices . . .
>
> (Hall & DuGay, 1996, p. 4).

> "well, *we* [faculty] just have to continuously make *them* [students] understand that its not about *that* [race], its about having an opportunity to give back to the community and fighting our main objective, childhood obesity"
>
> (BMoreFit Director, March 2010)

As Bonilla-Silva (2002) suggests, colorblind racism has become the core racial ideology of the post-civil rights era in which, due to the social transformations of the 60s and 70s, overt forms of racism are no longer a publically acceptable social norm (Wingfield & Feagin, 2012). While expressions of "hard racial framing" still manifest themselves publically (prominent conservative broadcasters like Rush Limbaugh and Don Imus, or the diatribes of Fuzzy Zoeller, Paula Deen, and Donald Sterling for example, are microcosmic of lingering, and resurgent, forms of old racist thinking), it is commonly seen as unacceptable to be overtly racist (Wingfield & Feagin, 2012). Nevertheless, reflective of the normative and

privileged position of whiteness, any public backlash against acts of blatant racism perpetuated by whites are minimized by individualizing the offender, thereby protecting the foundational logics of white privilege and power that reproduce this social hierarchy (Feagin, 2006, 2010). Instead, most manifestations of racism have become coded, disguised, and subtly expressed through, "(1) the extension of the principles of liberalism to racial matters in an abstract manner, (2) cultural rather than biological explanation of minorities' inferior standing and performance in labor and educational markets, (3) naturalization of racial phenomena such as residential and school segregation, and (4) the claim that discrimination has all but disappeared" (Bonilla-Silva, 2002, p. 42). Within such rhetorical strategies, it is suggested that the "colorblind race-talk" of whites is in actuality, a reaffirmation and reproduction of white privilege and white supremacy that conveniently denies the existence of racism, thereby enabling its systemic normalization and continued existence (Bonilla-Silva, 2002; Feagin, 2006).

Frighteningly, some scholars have also intimated that, in a climate of techno-dependency and the perceived anonymity of online social interaction, strong racist commentary is increasing and forging new spaces, opportunities, and collectivities around the expression of white racism and the preservation of white power (Back, Crabbe, & Solomos, 2001; Wingfield & Feagin, 2012). While whiteness has been socially constructed as a normative subject position—built upon centuries of colonization, oppression, and dehumanization of "othered" bodies (Feagin, 2010)—the contemporary preservation of its power within material and social relations reflects the embedded power of colorblind mythology, and its tendency to both conceal and/or make visible, the privileges of whiteness within post-modernity (Feagin, 2013). Or, as Endres & Gould (2009) put it, "people often go about their day-to-day lives without critically reflecting on the power associated with their

identities. Possessing or performing Whiteness is simultaneously an enactment and a masking of power and privilege" (p. 419). Within fitness and heath discourses, and/or spaces where pedagogies of the body are taught and performed, the privileges of whiteness are also complexly layered with patriarchal gender dynamics and middle class ideas about the morality of the body, which often becomes taken for granted as the normative, sovereign ideal through which fitness and health is achieved.

What I am suggesting here is that there exists a dominant representation of healthy living that has been sutured to, and is reflective of, the embodied expressions of the "conspicuous," "aspirant," and self-determining sovereignty of the white bourgeoisie (Bourdieu, 1984; Rose, 1996; Williams, 1995). Following Bourdieu's (1984) concept of 'cultural intermediaries', it is through the "emotional labor" (Bryman, 1999; Frew & McGillivray, 2005), specialized knowledge, and physical capital of the 'cultural intermediaries of fitness' (i.e., personal trainers, fitness coaches, etc.) that an ideal form of embodiment, lifestyle, and civic engagement has emerged, and been reproduced pedagogically (in classrooms, recreation centers, or non-profits), and discursively (popular mediated forms of fitness promotion). I argue that this archetype of idealized corporeality is also founded upon the logics of a white racial frame that "includes racial stereotypes, prejudices, commonsense assumptions, images, and sincere fictions that cast whites as more virtuous, intelligent, moral, and honest than members of other racial groups" (Wingfield & Feagin, 2012, p. 3). While I previously discussed the manner in which BMoreFit faculty expressed particular assumptions emerging from their position of racial and class privilege, it is the articulation of these representative subjectivities with the apex of fitness and health that proved particularly problematic amidst odes of colorblind fitness.

Over the course of my ethnographic engagement with BMoreFit, I was not surprised to witness a general avoidance of racial issues whenever the subject was aroused in conversation or during instruction about health outcomes. In most cases, whites deny the existence of racism and prefer to avoid the topic altogether (Bonilla-Silva, 2002). Thus, if presented with a situation concerning the topic of race, I found that faculty tended to exhibit subtle signs of discomfort, anxiety, denial, or the use of semantic moves in attempts to distance themselves from the implication of their role in structures of white privilege, power, and racial inequality (Bonilla-Silva, 2002). In this way, BMoreFit faculty, the director, and board members, participated in a form of 'soft racial framing' that, according to Wingfield and Feagin (2012), "downplays the reality of structural racism, glorifies people of color who ignore the presence of institutionalized racism, and plays up a "colorblind" language, while avoiding the openly racist terminology (for example, the N-word) of the hard racial frame" (p. 3). Thus, when students occasionally breached the subject of race, the responses of BMoreFit organizers reflected a proclivity to deny the impacts of structural racism, advocating for a colorblind vision that *fitness is for everybody* and that "anybody can change their life by taking personal responsibility for their own health" (Claude, BMoreFit Faculty, personal communication, July, 2010). Most often, the issue of race was simply avoided or downplayed as being relatively insignificant in light of the primary concerns of BMoreFit (i.e., reducing childhood obesity and improving the health of Baltimore citizens).

In addition to my own observations of this phenomenon, I learned much from a student intern who I had recruited from the University of Maryland to help BMoreFit in 2010. In several of our conversations, Talia (a pacific islander, raised in the US in a middle class family) provided key insights into the everyday relationships and interactions between faculty and students. More specifically, Talia was very involved personally with several of

the female students who perhaps saw her as less threatening and approachable, given that she was closer in age, and shared the common experience of being both female and an ethnic minority, in a patriarchal and Eurocentric space like the BAC. As such, female students were much more willing to confide in her about particular experiences, feelings, and thoughts concerning the program and their personal lives. When I inquired about the extent to which she noticed race being a factor in the social exchanges between faculty and staff, and the general atmosphere within the club space, we shared the following exchange:

> Talia: I felt that more so when I would be with the kids. I mean, myself and [the Director], we never ever once thought that…I mean, this is another thing that I had to realize when I was going through the program because I never once was like, oh, race, like I try to, I think we all should try not to have that, but then you have to realize that you have to take that [racial difference] into account as much as you just want to be like, "oh, there's no race issue, we're just focusing on fitness and health or whatever." In their minds, there is that distance because we're different. Like [the Director] is white and they're African American and the club is, I think its pretty upper level, I mean squash is a pretty upper level or rich sport, and so, when it was just [the Director] and I, and we would talk, or I would talk to them or any other of the faculty or staff, in our minds, that [race] wasn't an issue. But when I would talk with the kids, I remember sometimes, there was one talking to me and saying "well, they don't understand because you know, we're African American and they don't know our struggles and they don't know this and that." So, I did realize that that was something that was on their minds and I brought it to [the Director's] attention and he was just like, "well, we just have to continuously make them understand that its not about that, its about having an opportunity to give back to the community and fighting our main objective, childhood obesity" which is great.
>
> Ron: Okay. But what about when Sharice was around? I only got to see her work a few times and did not get a chance to speak to her very much.
>
> Talia: Well, she was a little older than me but she's African American and so I felt like when she would come in, she would have an advantage in teaching them.
>
> Ron: What do you mean? Like, she could identify with them easier?
>
> Talia: Yeah, I mean, she taught some of the exercise phys stuff. It's not that she, I mean, she can identify with them sure, but she didn't grow up like they did, really. But anyway, I felt like they gave her more respect and would

> listen to her more. Because she would talk to them like, "yes, this is the situation but *we* have to prove that *we're* not like this. And, you don't like the situation you're in, then okay, work hard, and lets get out of it." And she also emphasized that it's not about that. Its not about race, we are here for childhood obesity, we are here to help your community. That's what we're doing.
>
> Ron: So, you think it just meant more coming from her?
>
> Talia: Yeah. I mean, its just that…I think they could accept what she was saying easier because like, maybe it seems more genuine coming from a person that you more easily identify with, that is sharing your struggles and experiences or at least can better understand them, you know?…

As Talia alluded to, it appeared to be rather standard for faculty to regurgitate the Director's insistence that BMoreFit had nothing to do with race or racial inequalities, but was exclusively focused on improving the health of ***all*** Baltimoreans and combating the obesity epidemic. Thus, whenever the subject was raised (i.e., concerns over the reality of race-based inequities with respect to resources for health and fitness), either the Director or the acting faculty member would reiterate the purpose and goals of BMoreFit in an attempt to refocus students' attention on whatever form of training they were currently receiving. For example, in one of the most volatile incidents of this nature, students from the 2010 summer training program were on the verge of complete protest following a presentation given by a member of a civil law non-profit group.

Given the Director's intentions to inculcate a philanthropic mindset amongst the students, preparatory for them to take the message of BMoreFit back into their own communities, he had arranged a presentation to be given about how to get involved in local political issues. As such, a representative from the civil law in action group (CLIA), Mr. Wright (pseudonym), visited the BAC to talk about the basic elements of taking political action in localized contexts, and attempted to have students draft letters to their local Baltimore city representatives to 1) draw attention to the efforts of BMoreFit and solicit

support for future action 2) identify the most pressing health and fitness related issues (namely obesity) that students frequently found in their communities. Following the presentation, the Director and his assistant left the room, leaving the students, Mr. Wright, and myself, to write our letters. While Mr. Wright offered suggestions and encouragement, students, one by one, began to question the purpose of this activity and its effectiveness. In particular, and perhaps feeling emboldened by the absence of the Director, they openly questioned whether or not political leaders actually cared about people from their communities, and insisted that being black and poor had everything to do with the kind of neglect being shown to them. After about ten minutes of voicing their concerns and finally refusing to participate in the letter writing activity altogether, Mr. Wright ceased in his attempts to convince the students otherwise and left to find the Director. Upon returning to the room and learning of students' concerns about being ignored by City leaders who, "don't really care about black folks anyway" (Mike, BMoreFit Student), the Director launched into another deeply passionate speech about the goals and mission of BMoreFit. In what follows, I have reconstructed the Director's dialogue from my field notes:

> I understand you are frustrated with government and with all the things that have not been done to help you. Believe me, I am frustrated with government as well!... BMoreFit is here to help you and we want to make changes in your communities that will begin with you and this activity is part of that…You all have a unique opportunity here to be involved in something greater than yourselves and it will not be easy but I can assure you it will be worthwhile…But if you succumb to negative thinking about everything that is not fair, and decide that your efforts don't matter anyway, then nothing is going to change. Change starts with you, with each individual person… BMoreFit is not concerned with your race, color, or creed…we are focused on helping all people get healthy and improve their quality of life.

As the Director continued on with his dialogue, clearly pouring his heart and soul into this effort to motivate students and ameliorate their concerns, I peered around the room and noticed that students' appeared rather unfazed by the Director's appeal, but looked more

than ready to just move on and forget about the whole incident. In short, it seemed that the Director's passion for a multicultural ideal that was "post-racial" when it came to messages of fitness and health, actually stifled the chance for students to express themselves and engage in productive dialogue about their concerns with racial inequality. Instead, and following the proclivity of many whites to avoid the subject of race altogether, the dominant trope of fitness as a universal right and obligation, provided an easy semantic move to diminish the material realities of racial inequity. From instances like this, the message that was continuously reiterated to students was that health and fitness is *everybody's responsibility* regardless of who they are and where they come from, every individual has to do their part to make healthy change a reality.

Nevertheless, what I also found to be quite interesting was how the subject of race and racial inequality was strategically deployed in some contexts while being carefully avoided in others. Given the lack of familiarity with, and proximity to, the lived experiences of urban working class black culture, the Director and Faculty (all white except for one African American female instructor), were clearly unprepared, uncomfortable, and ill equipped to handle discussions of race with young people from this community. As such, this unfamiliarity contributes to *avoidance*, and for those who are the victims of racism, avoidance can be interpreted as an attempt to downplay its material affects and consequences (Castagno, 2008; Manalansan, 2005; Pollock, 2004). It can also be seen as conscious participation in those systems of white privilege and power that uphold systems of inequality and oppression. Thus, the blatantly apparent differences and divisions that already existed between students and faculty, I argue, were only further exacerbated and solidified by the faculty and director's failure to acknowledge and openly discuss an issue that was clearly on students' minds.

Ironically however, there were a few moments when the subject was purposely brought up within the context of learning about health disparities and how race is an overlying factor in the prevalence of poor health outcomes. In one particular meeting, one of the faculty members showed students a variety of statistics about health (in particular those relating to obesity, as the Director was wont to do) and towards the end, revealed the correlations and disparities related to race and class status. While students appeared to be either mildly troubled by the numbers, or somewhat ambivalent about their implication, it was not until the instructor contextualized these broader national disparities specifically to Baltimore that a palpable mood of disgust, turned anger, emerged. In particular, when discussing the differences between Baltimore City schools and Baltimore County schools in terms of their resources for physical activity, sport, and nutrition, students were particularly upset that they did not receive the same quality and quantity of support for their health and well being:

> "Why we don't get the same amount of money for our schools? It just isn't fair!"
>
> (Iesha, BMoreFit Student, 2010)

> "…how can they give all that stuff in the County and got nothing left for us though. Its like they really don't care bout us out here"
>
> (Mike, BMoreFit Student, 2010)

> "I mean, I know basically like, where you live impact how healthy people gonna be, but…I just…why cant they at least take some of that to put into city schools too, you know, so people can be healthier here too? Is it really that difficult?"
>
> (David, BMoreFit Student, 2010)

While the purpose of discussing various statistics related to health disparities and social inequities was to "light a fire under them", as the Director noted, (in terms of getting

students' to take ownership of the program so that they would advocate for BMoreFit and spread its message amongst the underprivileged communities from which they hail), the effort did not appear to take hold the way it was intended. Instead, students' became upset about the implications of the statistics and responded with questions and comments that reflected a palpable sense of discouragement and hopelessness. The Director had assumed this activity would arouse a sense of urgency to act on behalf of other underprivileged African Americans from students' communities, but faced with the daunting reality of such conditions, and the seemingly modest, even inconsequential, role being played by BMoreFit in eradicating the broad scale of health disparities discussed, students' seemed overwhelmed. More importantly, they had a right to feel unnecessarily burdened by this imposed responsibility. Not only were students being asked to change themselves (urged to adopt a fitness first attitude, behavior, and lifestyle), they were being tasked with the unrealistic imperative to act as catalysts for healthy change within their own communities; areas lacking an infrastructure for healthy living, ensconced in levels of poverty, unemployment, and crime that is well out of their control.

Subsequently, the salient message of this stated imperative, and that of the entire BMoreFit program as a result, was that the solutions to poor health rests on the shoulders of individuals (and by extension, private philanthropic organizations tasked with the development of creative strategies for intervention), rather than communities, governments, and the public. In this way, neoliberal imperatives and ideals were subtly reinforced through the manner in which students were taught to take responsibility for their own health, and by the range of potential solutions offered to combat health disparities. With consistent appeals to the liberating potential of exercise, the Director painted a portrait of self-determination and self-sufficiency as realized through the willingness of individuals to accept responsibility

for their own health and do something about it. The Director argued that by educating the public about fitness and health, each individual, following their re-education, would be in a better position to improve themselves physically and mentally, through the emancipatory potential of personal fitness.

From my earlier conversations with the Director about the first test pilot group of students who, according to him, "had significant behavioral issues" and did not progress through the program with the level of enthusiasm and purpose he had desired, I interpreted this attempt to teach the students about health disparities as a more aggressive effort to inculcate a philanthropic mindset amongst them. From the beginning, it was always a part of the Director's goals to provide the knowledge and skills for students to become healthier and gain employment for themselves, but perhaps more importantly, he wanted students to take what he had given them and advocate for healthy change within their own communities. It is within this particular aspect of the program's intentions that I compared such efforts with forms of *neo-colonialism*, in as much as students were viewed, and talked about, as future "ambassadors of fitness" who could take the fitness discourses and practices of BMoreFit to the very Baltimore communities that the Faculty and Director were desirous to help, but would more than likely avoid when traveling through the city.

To make sense of this arrangement, I use the term neocolonialism to describe a situation of cultural imperialism and assimilation that links the BMoreFit program and its promoters to the broader landscape of urban health promotion and governance. As a term that describes the various forms of economic, political, and socio-cultural power wielded by developed nations with respect to their involvement in developing nations (former colonies), neocolonialism, first coined by former Ghanaian president Kwame Nkrumah, encompasses a critique of the forces and processes that maintain situations of inequality, dependency, and

paternalism (Nkrumah, 1965). Applied to the micro political discourse of BMoreFit and its location within the broader structures of urban governance in Baltimore, I found the concept of neocolonialism appropriate for several reasons. First, there exists a clear distinction between powerful and powerless, privileged and underprivileged, advantaged and disadvantaged within both the structure of the BMoreFit program (Faculty retained the 'authority' to teach and control all parameters of participation, reserving the right to expel any student for failure to comply with program regulations), and the material realities of race and class that daily structure participants' lived experiences, and their access to education, housing, employment, and health care. Second, the strategic intervention of BMoreFit manifested itself through a *pedagogical approach* to improving the health and fitness of poorer urban populations. In other words, their philanthropic efforts did not take the form of direct contact, and hands-on engagement, with the oppressed groups they claimed to be assisting (predominantly poor African American communities in Baltimore), but rather, by disseminating specific pedagogies of middle class, neoliberal fitness to small groups of youth residing in those same communities, sought to instill these logics from afar. In as much as neocolonial powers seek to leverage economic resources and political control, they also utilize culture and the cultural apparatus (Mills, 1956), to promote shared values and beliefs, and facilitate cultural assimilation. In this way, I suggest that BMoreFit pre-packaged a curriculum of fitness and health that communicated specific values reflective of the ideals, experience, and positionality of the Director, Board of Directors, and Faculty. Further, these values were also confirmed and corroborated by the use of scientific research and the popular discourse of health practitioners and fitness professionals at large.

Lastly, and reflective of the convergence of neocolonialism and neoliberal healthism within this context, the expectation that students would carry the message of BMoreFit to

their own communities demonstrates the imperatives of those in positions of power and privilege to influence, govern, and impact oppressed populations from a safe distance, through healthist pedagogies of individualism and personal fitness. I found that this sort of mentality manifested itself rather frequently when interviewing faculty members and asking them about how they sought to encourage students to take what they learned back to their own communities:

> Like, you can see when we showed the kids the disparities between communities and they were just like, "well, why don't we have good lunches, why don't we have exercise, why aren't we given these things?" And it's a lot that they are not provided with these things and I think BMoreFit is a great program because we are showing them this and educating them and we're training them to become fitness instructors and become physically educated so they can take that anger they have for why they don't have these things, the disparities, and then with their education, make noise about it, you know?
>
> (Debbie, BMoreFit Faculty, Aug 2010)

From comments like this, it became clear that the true purpose of BMoreFit was not simply to improve the health and fitness levels of small groups of Baltimore youth. Rather, it was about trying to change the way students *thought* about fitness and health. More specifically, to change their attitude and outlook concerning personal responsibility for health, appropriate forms of bodywork, and the role that philanthropy can play in improving community health outcomes. In this way, students were viewed as the potential harbingers of BMoreFit's fitness pedagogy. They were being groomed to take the message of BMoreFit back to their own communities to educate the masses and advocate for greater responsibility on the part of community members to "do their part" by being more physically active, eating healthy, and making healthy lifestyle changes. It was a strategy that made sense to a lot of people that are spatially and culturally disconnected from the communities that are the very target of this intervention. In line with all the teleological assumptions of enlightenment rationality and liberal humanism, the philanthropic efforts of BMoreFit reflect the tendencies

of powerful social actors to impose their ideas and ways of life on the less fortunate, namely because they are considered to be the most correct means through which *all people* can improve their own quality of life.

Conclusion: Pedagogies of the privileged: imposing order, imposing discipline

> One of the basic elements of the relationship between oppressor and oppressed is prescription. Every prescription represents the imposition of one individual's choice upon another, transforming the consciousness of the person prescribed to into one that conforms with the prescriber's consciousness (Freire, 2000, pp. 46-47).

The words of Paulo Freire appear throughout this chapter as a constant reminder to remain critically conscious of the politics of philanthropy. Any charitable act, or programming for the less fortunate, must be careful not to (re)produce patterns of inequality, paternalism, or dependence, particularly when such endeavors target marginalized groups of young ethnic minorities. In particular, Freire's notion of "prescription" in the quote above, is meant to communicate an important theme of fitness philanthropy; namely that, similar to fields of medicine and health, the specters of fitness related knowledge and practice that so readily appear, and impose upon us, throughout our daily lives, are those very same ideas and practices that are *prescribed* by "experts," confirmed by medical authority, and mobilized within pedagogical institutions. As such, they have become the dominant frameworks through which thought and action, relative to the care and maintenance of the physical body, proceeds.

To paraphrase Freire's terms, the ~~oppressors~~ privileged seek to impose their ways of life upon the ~~oppressed~~ underprivileged in order to incorporate, and adapt, them to the existing conditions of their subordination and marginalization. In other words, they do not seek to change the material conditions of inequality, but rather prefer to selectively integrate

a "promising" few who, following their (mis/re)education, can become more like the ~~oppressor~~ privileged; that is, someone who, being seduced by the logics of individualism, willingly accepts the systems of inequity and actively reproduces them, consciously or not, for their own individual benefit. At this juncture, it should be noted that, while Freire uses the term, 'oppressors' to discuss those who experience privilege, and possess the power to govern, control, and shape society in their interests, the association of this term with (fitness) philanthropists and charitable institutions is likely to be viewed with contempt.

Nevertheless, the reality is that such forms of charitable giving reflect the privileged mindset of an oppressor consciousness, which, as Freire suggests, "tends to transform everything surrounding it into an object of its domination. The earth, property, production, the creations of people, people themselves, time—everything is reduced to the status of objects at its disposal" (2000, p. 58). Reflective of Freire's banking concept in education then, the impetus to educate the masses about fitness and health equates to little more than depositing the information deemed "appropriate" or "correct" into the receptacles of students' minds. If no effort is made to stand in solidarity with the oppressed, see things from their perspective, engage in dialogic encounters, and include them as equals in a co-created process of liberation and enlightenment, then the effort to 'educate' them has already failed because they are viewed as the *objects* of intervention.

This mindset, which views the poor and oppressed as objects, less than, or inferior, reflects the insatiable possessiveness of the oppressor consciousness, which suggests that, "what is worthwhile is having more—always more—even at the cost of the oppressed having less or having nothing. For them *to be is to have* and to be the class of the haves" (p. 58). Thus, when they give something back (money, objects, time, educational training) to those who have little or nothing, Freire suggests that these gestures reflect a "sadistic love"

that maintains the conditions of need, and the justification for the powerful to control, govern, and influence the oppressed. In other words, with no efforts to change the conditions of inequality, the generous gift merely perpetuates dependence, and maintains the power of the oppressor.

From this perspective, charitable giving "acts as an anesthetic, distracting the oppressed from the true causes of their problems…splintering the oppressed into groups of *individuals* hoping to get a few more benefits for themselves" which, is particularly problematic, in an era of fiscal crisis "since the dominant elites cannot "aid" everyone, they end by increasing the restiveness of the oppressed" (p. 152). Thus, while the aims of fitness philanthropy might appear laudable, for instance, to reform the health of poor populations for their benefit, the actual formation of such efforts must be questioned. To this point, and with regard to the pedagogical purposes of fitness philanthropy specifically, it is worth quoting Freire at length:

> Indeed, the interests of the oppressors lie in "changing the consciousness of the oppressed, not the situation which oppresses them"; for the more the oppressed can be led to adapt to that situation, the more easily they can be dominated…They are treated as individual cases, as marginal persons who deviate from the general configuration of a "good, organized, and just" society. The oppressed are regarded as the pathology of the healthy society, which must therefore adjust these "incompetent and lazy" folk to its own patterns by changing their mentality. These marginals need to be "integrated," "incorporated" into the healthy society that they have "forsaken" (p. 74).

Not only do Freire's comments critique the neoliberal tendency to individualize responsibility, blaming the oppressed for their condition, but they also highlight the sovereign mindset of the oppressor and his desire to control and reform those who have, according to his privileged perspective, chosen to "deviate" from "healthy society" and are in need of correction and re-incorporation. Thus, in a Freireian sense, such initiatives of philanthropic endeavor are immediately doomed to reproduce power imbalances because

they are premised upon the impetus to identify, and respond to, the perceived pathologies of *individuals*, rather than the social and environmental conditions, which afflict entire communities. Concerning those *individuals* targeted by, and recruited into, BMoreFit then, the ensuing chapter examines the position of BMoreFit students, and provides an ethnographic rendering of some of their experiences and perspectives.

CHAPTER THREE: RESISTING SOVEREIGN WHITENESS OR "WORKING THE SYSTEM" OF PRIVILEGE AND POWER?

> "There are more African-American men under the control of the criminal justice system than were enslaved in 1850, and because of the war on drugs, four out of five black youth in some communities can expect to be either in prison or caught up in the criminal justice system at some point in their lives"
>
> (Giroux, 2012, p. 35)

Just talking…

David: …he [the Director] definitely tryin get us believing in all this fitness stuff, like it gonna instantly change what he talking bout [i.e., the obesity epidemic, high rates of disease and mortality amongst the urban poor] but…

Me: …You don't really feel like it can have an impact?

David: …it aint that it can't have no impact…but, I know it aint' that simple.

Me: Aight. Why you feel at way though?

David: It's just hard…some people make it sound so easy and its not. You can't just say "do this" or "do that" and make *everything* better…

Me: I agree, it aint a simple matter at all.

David: …Yea, basically. Like, we sposed to take this message to our communities an all but there only but 6 of us! And we can't force nobody be healthier…

In several conversations with David (a pseudonym), I was more than pleased to hear him articulate the positive and negative aspects of the BMoreFit program unfiltered and without hesitation. David, an 18 year old high school senior from West Baltimore, had experienced at one time or another in his young life, some quite difficult, and unfortunately all too frequent, outcomes associated with growing up in declining Baltimore City neighborhoods: broken homes, gangs, drugs, witness intimidation, violence, crime, and police harassment. Nevertheless, resilient, witty, and unflinching, David struck me as

someone possessing tremendous courage and inner strength. He was also very outgoing, and an astute observer of people, who was willing to speak to anyone, at any time, about any topic. It seemed apparent that, with his calm voice, gentle smile, and approachable personality, he could connect with people from all different walks of life. Having noticed his penchant for social observation early on in my fieldwork, David was the first BMoreFit student I approached about my research, and the Photovoice project I was seeking to conduct with all BMoreFit students.

We talked generally about ethnography as a form of doing research, and the potential it could have for influencing public policies dealing with the marginalized and oppressed (social services, recs and parks, access to fresh foods). Specifically, when David mentioned that, "they need to stop closing all the rec centers," I responded, "yea, I agree, it aint right." "So, that somethin you workin on with your research", he rejoined. Such a candid and quick retort, I was caught off guard. I wished I could have been able to answer in the affirmative but, not wanting to imply that I had the power to influence something so far out of my control, I responded, "Not exactly man. Not me at least. I mean, I'm hopeful that more people doing this kind of work can someday make a difference on that scale but its complicated." It was not a great answer and we both knew it, but I wanted to be as transparent as possible and avoid the idealistic and insular optimism that BMoreFit organizers often employed to motivate students. They knew things were not as simple as some people made them out to be; that it takes a lot more than just hard work and individual effort to overcome embedded structural barriers to health. As I brought up things like "participatory action research" and "photovoice," and proceeded to explain how these methods seek collaboration with those the research is meant to represent and ultimately help, David began to express some interest, and also seemed the most adamant about

participating in the Photovoice project I was preparing to carry out. In a short amount of time, David became one of my favorite people to speak with at the BAC.

As much as I wanted to learn from him and better understand his experiences and how he perceived the BMoreFit program, he was equally keen to know about what I was doing, and why I was doing it. In between exchanges about sports and current events, we also talked about some of the issues facing young people in Baltimore and what could possibly be done to ameliorate some of those conditions. At one point, I asked David how much of a role he thought racism played in the prevalence of health disparities, and the quite polarized experiences of black and white folks living in and around the Baltimore area? David responded to me that, "…it definitely plays a part, I mean, like, I know you heard the term 'driving while black', before right?" (Personal Communication, June 2011). I responded that I was very familiar with the meaning (i.e., that black men, in particular, experience a significantly greater risk of being pulled over by police, and harassed, than their white counterparts), and that I had actually witnessed this firsthand on several occasions, when a passenger riding in a vehicle driven by one of my friends who "fit the description." More importantly however, David eventually expressed his hope that things would someday change, and that everyone, regardless of where they come from, would at the very least, have access to basic social services and physical activity/health resources, and greater educational and employment opportunities for both social and economic advancement:

> Sometimes I don't know, but I do just hope things, *change*. Where everyone get the same opportunity. Give people a chance to be healthy, and most probably would, if they can. Work. Make money. Go to school. All that. Work out and eat good.

While we had previously been talking about the social realities of racism, David also alluded to class disparities, which in constant articulation with race, can either facilitate or restrict opportunities for people to engage in activities of self-betterment, both physically and

economically. Such realities are not always easy to talk about, but shared understanding and honest dialogue about such difficult issues is important. Out of these, and other, moments of sincere reflection, David and I shared the kind of dialogue I believe is essential for facilitating more progressive attitudes and shared understandings of what equality and justice might look like. It was nothing big, just two young men talking. But the performative act of our dialogue represents something larger than us, that if, and when, mobilized on a larger scale, can represent the possibility for greater, and more meaningful exchanges, progressive attitudes, and hopefully, a greater realization of social justice, equity, and freedom for all. From some brief, yet generative, discussions, David also pushed me to see and interpret the events and circumstances unfolding around the BMoreFit program in occasionally new and different ways. I considered David's interpretive lens (influenced by his subjectivity and life experience), and brutal honesty, to be of tremendous value for critically reading the language and actions of BMoreFit faculty. Thus, our conversations not only helped influence my understandings of BMoreFit students and their experiences in the program, but also enabled me to cross check some of my observations of faculty and how they interacted with students.

Despite the barriers he faced, David was not bitter about his position in the social hierarchy and did not complain about not having received all the same benefits and opportunities that "kids from the county" [Baltimore County] would get. Having applied and been accepted to participate in the BMoreFit program, David made the most of his experience, gaining a YMCA certified fitness trainer qualification. After completing the program, David and I corresponded several times about the Photovoice project, but we eventually lost touch after his cell phone was cut off, leaving no forwarding contact information. Indeed, to say that it was difficult to maintain contact with David and the rest

of the students following their completion of the BMoreFit summer training program would be an understatement. To some extent, this was due to the relative instability of many of their living situations, and the frequency with which phone numbers and addresses changed. Several students moved between the residences of parents, extended family, and friends, to either take advantage of better educational opportunities or to avoid conflicts/safety concerns in the home or neighborhood.

In a few conversations with David, Asia, and Mike in particular, I was humbled to learn of their frequent transience and uncertainty with respect to things like housing, education, and employment; the very things that many people take for granted, or view as privately earned accomplishments rather than basic social provisions. While I could recount my very brief experience of living out of my car and bouncing between friends' houses as a young adult, this was nothing compared to the very real circumstances of impoverishment and neglect they faced as young people in some of the most harrowing material and social conditions. In short, the experiences of David, Asia, and Mike are not simply aberrations in an otherwise fair and equal system of urban governance; they are reflective of millions of other young people who are, on an everyday basis, fighting for their very survival. Subsequently, when it comes to philanthropic interventions, it is important to first consider the manner in which young people are broadly perceived within our society, and more specifically, how the strategies for addressing, governing, and educating "at-risk" or "urban" youth are often interconnected to, and implicated within, already existing patterns, spaces, and ideologies of urban neoliberalism (Melamed, 2006; Peck & Tickell, 2002; Pitter & Andrews, 1997).

For example, the incessant retrenchment of funding for Recs & Parks, and privatization of physical activity and fitness opportunities, reflects an outcome of

neoliberalization that, according to Peck & Tickell (2002, p. 385), has been, "inducing localities to compete by cutting social and environmental regulatory standards and eroding the political and institutional collectivities upon which more progressive settlements had been constructed in the past (and might be again in the future)." Following this broad shift from municipal managerialism to individual entrepreneurialism (Harvey 1989), the emergence of voluntary sector interventions likewise function to embed, and legitimate, the normalcy of neoliberal policy and discourse throughout all levels of society, including pedagogical practices of individual lifestyle management and body maintenance (Howell & Ingham, 2001). The actual impact this has at the level of lived experience, particularly for those neglected and rendered "disposable" by these very same forces and processes, is thus of considerable importance within our neoliberalizing historical present (Hall, 2012).

Having discussed in chapter two, the contextual emergence of BMoreFit, and the use of governing techniques, which reflected organizers own assumptions, values, and perspectives from a white racial frame (Feagin, 2013) and position of class privilege (Williams, 1995), this chapter focuses on the responses of students and how they negotiated their place within the BMoreFit program, and BAC space. More specifically, and given the starkly divergent positionalities, experiences, and material circumstances of both faculty and students, I have sought to represent, and make audible, the voices of students who, within the strictures of the program, were often deterred from expressing disagreement, discussing potentially sensitive issues, or making authority challenging statements or questions (Castagno, 2008). As such, and having been involved with BMoreFit during its transition from its original "hands-on" fitness training formation, to its current model of producing a fitness manual to disseminate to schoolteachers (see Epilogue), this chapter also discusses how tenuous and ephemeral the summer training program inevitably was, and why. With it's

first "pilot" round of the program in 2009 largely considered "too challenging" and "overwhelming" (Director, personal communication, 2010) with respect to working with the older "at-risk" and unemployed, young adults (18-25 years old, many without a diploma or GED) recruited from the Mayor's Office for Employment Development, the 2010 program that I observed (16-18 year old enrolled high school juniors and seniors), seemed to reflect a more vigilant focus on controlling the learning environment and instilling discipline through "good" healthy habits. Perhaps fearful of losing control of the students within the BAC space, or not preparing them adequately enough to pass examinations to earn fitness certificates, the Director often mentioned how important it was to "keep students on task" and to "stay focused on fitness" which, as I will argue, also created the conditions for some occasional conflict. Thus, in the sections that follow, I contextualize the "problem" of addressing "urban" youth, and provide a reflexive account of my engagements with BMoreFit students in 2010, paying attention to the ways in which they creatively negotiated their participation in the program, and responded to particular ideals and/or practices of health and fitness that sometimes conflicted with their own worldviews and lived experiences.

In noticing how students responded to various forms of instruction and discipline, I organized my field notes around three emergent themes that, given their recurring frequency in my observations, I found to be most representative of students' experiences, namely 1) how students strategically resisted pedagogical and programmatic aspects of the program while still keeping the Director and faculty happy enough to allow their continued participation 2) how students negotiated their presence in a very privileged and exclusive health club space 3) how students resisted the (real and perceived) imposition of dominant ideals of health and fitness that were inevitably linked to an exhibition of privileged white

middle class-ness. Thus, the sections that follow provide a discussion of these observations and my engagements with students. In short, and having outlined the basic structure of the program, and suggesting its linkages with broader forms of neoliberal urban governance that specifically target underserved youth of color, my purpose in the remainder of this chapter is to focus on discussing and making visible, the experiences, perspectives, and voices of students as they negotiated their place within the disciplinary and pedagogical structure of BMoreFit.

Playing the game: Youth and creative strategies of resistance

> We must never merely discourse on the present situation, must never provide people with programs which have little or nothing to do with their own preoccupations, doubts, hopes, and fears—programs which at times in fact increase the fears of the oppressed consciousness. It is not our role to speak to the people about our own view of the world, nor to attempt to impose that view on them, but rather to dialogue with the people about their view and ours. We must realize that their view of the world, manifested variously in their action, reflects their *situation* in the world. Educational and political action which is not critically aware of this situation runs the risk either of "banking" or of preaching in the desert.
>
> (Freire, 2000, p. 96)

> *I hear you Ron, but I'm just trying to get through this program for now…and hopefully I can use these connects for a job or something…*
>
> (*David, BMoreFit Student*)

> *…it's not like I don't enjoy the activities, you know, I just…get tired of putting on the happy face all the time…ain't nobody happy like that all the time!*
>
> (*Iesha, BMoreFit Student*)

In as much as the BMoreFit organization sought to recruit and train Baltimore youth in principles of fitness and health to prepare them for employment in the industry, and provide the knowledge and skills so that students could help improve the health of their own communities, the curriculum inevitably resembled elements of a job-training program. Early on in my fieldwork, I had several exchanges with the Director where we talked about his

reasoning for establishing a regimented schedule, regulations for conduct, and routines that would mimic the workplace. In one conversation, he mentioned that, "I want to prepare them for the real world out there, what they can expect…they will be better prepared for real conditions on the job" (Director, March, 2010). From the very beginning, it was the Director's intention to not only provide an education in fitness, exercise, and health, but an education in life skills; being on time, being prepared for work, following directions, working toward goals and deadlines, staying focused, and most fascinating of all, how to maintain and demonstrate an aura of positivity at all times (i.e., to smile and feign the emotional labor of a happy upbeat attitude), but especially when "on the clock." I have discussed this form of "emotional labor" (Bryman, 1999) previously in terms of how BMoreFit faculty specifically, and the majority of fitness professionals generally, put on a smile, speak enthusiastically, and try to maintain an optimistic attitude and "pep in their step" which is meant to denote how happy and content people are supposed to be when they are physically fit and pleased with the appearance of their bodies (Frew & McGillivray, 2005). Given the nature of the job description—which includes the tacit understanding that in order to most effectively motivate clients to work out harder, faster, and/or longer in pursuit of their fitness goals, the trainer must exude this cheerful veneer, providing consistent support and positive reinforcement—the Director would consistently remind students to "smile, be happy" or ask them to come together for the "one, two, three, BMoreFit" cheer that required everyone to put one hand into the circle, shout the refrain, and in unison, throw their hands up into the air (Field Notes, Summer 2010). At any given moment, if some of the students, or the group as a whole, seemed to be disengaged, tired, bored, or troubled by something, the Director would ask students to join him in executing this symbolic performance of solidarity and group uplift.

The first time I witnessed the cheer, I watched closely for the reactions of students because it didn't look like the kind of thing most teenage youth would do willingly, let alone be much excited about doing, outside the contexts of competitive team sport. And while it remains a fairly common symbolic expression of team unity within American (sport) culture, perhaps it was the anachronistic manner in which the director facilitated the cheer that heightened my curiosity. Gathering everyone together into a circle, the director cheerily encouraged students to perform the motions as he did, collectively moving the temporarily conjoined hands, layered on top of each other, up and down with each count until finally breaking the circle and throwing the hands up on the final count with the exclamation of "BMoreFit." Once they finished and began to disperse from the circle, I confirmed my suspicion that students did not, in fact, share the same enthusiasm as the Director, but rather, saw this performative act as just another part of their responsibilities of participation. Importantly, Iesha would later note to me that, "*it's just what we do when things get slow or we're off task a little…and we do it…so, I guess it's a good thing*" (Iesha, Field notes, July 2010). Iesha, also a high school senior, likewise viewed her participation in BMoreFit as "a unique opportunity to learn about fitness and health" (Iesha, Field notes, July 2010), but maintained some reservations about feeling pressured to change her own body. Thoughtful, soft spoken, and genuine, Iesha was frequently complemented by faculty (given "positive reinforcement" as faculty described it) for demonstrating a positive attitude, which, from her wide glowing smile, could not be refuted. Following our exchange, I once again absconded to an area near the end of the squash courts, furthest from the entrance, where I could sit and jot down notes of my observations of the cheer and my interpretation of students' responses.

Although I did not fully realize it at the time, being absorbed in trying to develop rapport with both faculty and students, Iesha's comments about the cheer had alluded to,

what I would eventually see, as just one of many subtle and creative ways in which students managed their participation in the BMoreFit program; how they effectively *played the game* of appearances, and appropriate behavior, to keep the faculty happy and maintain good standing within the organization, despite their occasional discontent. Representing yet another test of students' obedience, and devotion to BMoreFit and its purpose, the performance of the cheer compelled students' to demonstrate a positive attitude, which would be viewed as a sign of their investment in the program. Thus, displays of positivity, hard work ethic, and an eagerness to learn and excel within the prescriptive expectations of the program curriculum became just as important as students' actual performance in physical and intellectual tasks (i.e., performing exercises in a group fitness class, or answering questions about exercise physiology and muscle anatomy, for example). In this sense, it seemed that what mattered most was the actual willingness to submit to the "official" authority of "fitness professionals" who, representing aspirational texts of fitness, could provide a model for how students should seek to live out their own lives. It was therefore assumed that by instilling a "fitness first lifestyle" that reflected the lived experiences of fit, healthy, and successful BMoreFit organizers, students would be better prepared to live healthy, successful lives themselves. However, this attitude of certainty with respect to organizers' confidence in the ability of fitness to change young people's lives was sometimes met with confusion, disagreement, and resistance.

More specifically, because there were no formal opportunities for students to express their concerns, I noticed that students strategically expressed disagreement through sarcasm and subterfuge, making jokes or comments that, while highlighting a particular aspect of conflict, remained relatively innocuous to authority figures who could not, or did not want to, understand what students actually meant by their occasional quips. As the most

outspoken, and occasionally brazen, BMoreFit students during the 2010 program, Asia and Mike often engaged in playful banter with each other, which would sometimes draw the attention and disapproval of authority figures. For example, a key point of disagreement between students and faculty arose out of differing conceptions of "good" health and how it relates to the appearance (size, shape) of the physical body. As will be discussed in the subsequent section, several students felt pressured to conform to an idealized image of fitness that they felt faculty were trying to impose upon them. At the height of these concerns, and following the Director's attempt to address them publicly with the group, I noticed that several students began joking with the Director and faculty members in a way that sarcastically pointed to what students' perceived as the faculty's overzealous preoccupation with getting "skinny" and having a tight and toned body shape. Similar to Rodriguez's (2011) observations of minority students' use of 'silence as speech' within predominantly white classrooms, the use of sarcasm to subtly resist BMoreFit pedagogy protected students from disciplinary action while enabling the expression of critique. Rather than explicitly state their disagreements and frustrations with faculty's prescriptive body/weight management pedagogy, they took the meanings and messages they were receiving and over-exaggerated them through humor and sarcasm. For example, in one group exercise session, the students, including myself, were performing a series of abdominal floor exercises when Mike blurted out, "*oh yea, gotta get me some six pack abs so I can go to the beach!*" (Mike, July 2010). Mike's tone of voice, mimicking what sounded like a mixture of Arnold Schwarzenegger and a surfer from California, sent everyone into a fit of laughter, briefly disrupting the intense focus of the group exercise session.

While faculty members consistently tried to keep students focused and on task, even they could not entirely suppress such moments of laughter and lightheartedness. It was

particularly in moments like this that students seemed to bond and become more cohesive as a group, realizing that in such moments, they collectively retained the power to ever briefly disrupt and influence the ebb and flow of daily program activities. While a blatant refusal to participate, lackluster effort, or a poor attitude could result in expulsion from the program, the use of playful sarcasm and humor accomplished the desire of students to influence their surroundings and demonstrate their discontent subtly. Particularly after this incident, and seeing it as a safe and acceptable way to express themselves, I noticed that students became more willing to employ sarcasm as a way of demonstrating their disagreement with BMoreFit's fitness pedagogy. For example, in the following comments (Noted between June-Aug, 2010), students continued this trend by appropriating the same messages they heard from faculty about fitness and health, but exaggerated them through the use of a contrived white middle class accent. As such, the following comments were all made sarcastically, employed mimicry and the altering of one's voice, and were followed by laughter amongst most of the group:

> *"haven't you heard? Fitness is now FREE…it's for everybody!"*
>
> *(Erika)*

> *"You just have to do something every day, you know? Fitness is a lifestyle, man. You just gotta do it, man"*
>
> *(Mike)*

> *"I just love to workout, its like I cant live without it. I think I'd probably die without it…"*
>
> *(Iesha)*

Given their vulnerable position, it is conceivable that student's attempts to subtly poke fun at the faculty's strict commitment to fitness and middle class propriety and professionalism, was viewed as the safest way to openly express their disagreements, and foster collective power through their shared understanding. Whether or not faculty picked up on the underlying meanings and intentions of student's comments in this regard, I am unsure. Not

wanting to disrupt students' ability to do this, I refrained from asking the faculty questions about how they interpreted students' playful ridicule of their ultra fit lifestyles and privileged position as white, middle class fitness professionals. As I saw it, such commentary enabled students' to retain a small semblance of power within a space that was consistently trying to discipline and mold them, physically and mentally, into "proper" fitness professionals and microphilanthropists.

These disciplinary mechanisms (training routines and pedagogies of fitness) were intended to produce bodies and minds that accepted dominant perceptions and practices concerning health. To openly rebel against them meant giving up one's position in the program. To fully comply meant accepting the fitness dogmas, worldviews, and health conscious lifestyle that is typically associated with white, middle-classness. Savvy enough to recognize and subtly manipulate the imposition of these forces, the students I observed during the 2010 summer program demonstrated their resistance to these ideals by carefully managing the performance of subterfuge, while still maintaining their good standing in the program. After recognizing these interactions as forms of resistance, I asked Talia if she had noticed any similar incidents, or if students had opened up to her about their experiences and perceptions of the program. She suggested that a couple students had confided in her about how they felt insignificant and overlooked within the everyday machinations of the program. In one interview, Talia expressed the following:

> …I felt like a lot of times, we had all these experts [fitness professionals as guest faculty] come in and they would ask the students, like, "well, what do *you* think or what will work for *you*?" and then they would just state their own ideas and plans and stuff. And then afterwards they [the students] would be like, "they weren't even listening to us." Like, they're intelligent, they know when someone is not listening to them, when someone already has a preconceived…like us going in and saying, "oh, this is going to work but lets just lead *them* to that answer." They know that we're doing that, you know? They're more intelligent than we sometimes give them credit for. Like a lot of times, we'll think, "well, they're just kids, what do they know?" They know

> a lot. They know that a person is not listening to them and they know what will get their community and the kids in their high school to move and go this direction. They know that certain foods that we're trying to give them or tell them that they're healthier, they wont initially work. Like, if you tell someone to eat carrots instead of chips right away, you're not going to get anywhere. So, I feel like to get anywhere, *we really have to start listening to the people we're actually trying to help* and stop trying to think, "well, this theory will work or this worked in this city" and yes, those worked and they might work in Baltimore but you have to understand that you have to tweak every little thing to a certain community because they know if you're not listening to them. And, the second they know you're not listening and you're just trying to pretend your listening, they're not going to listen to you and they're not going to want to be there and they're not going to want to help with the bigger picture. So, I feel like that's an issue. We have to realize that they are smarter than some people think. We have to be genuine (Personal communication, *italics added*, September, 2011).

Talia's observations here not only point to some problematic assumptions concerning the intelligence and capacities of underprivileged black youth, but they suggest the vital, and often overlooked importance, particularly amongst the privileged, of *listening* to, and *working with*, those you are trying to help, rather than acting on authoritative assumptions about what is best *for them*. Further, it cannot be understated the extent to which students were expected to simply receive, accept, embrace, and embody, the knowledge and training being provided to them; as if, because of their disadvantaged position, they should just accept without question, the education being provided to them because it is unique, exclusive, and they are lucky to be receiving it at all (being just a handful of young people out of thousands of potential others in Baltimore). In this sense, and following Freire's (2000) critical perspective, BMoreFit's dominant fitness pedagogy resembled a "banking" style approach in which, students were viewed as empty receptacles awaiting the imparting of knowledge from an omniscient teacher who embodies power and authority. This lack of dialogic engagement, I argue, was at the core of the program's failures because, at the end of the day, the original idea and purpose of the program emerged from the identification of a problem

(hapless youth involved in drugs, gangs, and other unhealthy behaviors including poor dietary habits and sedentary lifestyles) and the desire to fix it (through a specified form of fitness education).

Furthermore, and thanks to Iesha, David, and Asia in particular, I was occasionally reminded of the importance to not determinately interpret and position students' experiences, and the conditions of their everyday lives, as being expressly linked to the outcomes of an oppressive social structure. In other words, they reminded me to not lose sight of agentic possibilities within even the most delimiting structural conditions. Although disadvantaged and underserved, they were not just passive victims of the post-industrial urban condition and the entrenched marginality produced by the collapse of public institutions (Wacquant, 2013). Rather, students were actively negotiating their position within this space of physical culture amidst an array of institutional barriers (racism, sexism, housing and employment discrimination, poor education, diminished resources for recreation and physical activity, police harassment, etc.), and environmental traps (family conflict, violence, drugs, crime, gangs, etc.) that mark the divided physical cultural experiences of polarized American cities (Andrews, Silk, & Pitter, 2008). In this regard, Robin D. G. Kelley's (1998) assertion that there are several cultural practices (music, dance, art, and sport) wherein urban youth creatively negotiate and respond to the experiences of unemployment, financial hardships, isolation, and desperation in a post-industrial urban environment is apposite. In particular, he suggests that utilization of the body as a source of pleasurable expression and potential capital accumulation is indicative of this creative negotiation:

> I am in no way suggesting that this kind of "play" is emancipatory, revolutionary, or even resistive. Rather, it comprises a range of strategies within capitalism–some quite entrepreneurial in fact–intended to enable

> working-class youth to avoid dead-end, low-wage labor while devoting their energies to creative and pleasurable pursuits (Kelley, 1998, p. 197)

In as much as these activities are inherently linked to the body and its corporeal performance within urban spaces, I found it noteworthy to witness the manner in which BMoreFit students were likewise pursuing work opportunities through the strategic use of their bodies within a space that, as David would suggest to me, often made them feel "out of place" and "uncomfortable" (Field notes, August 2010). Nevertheless, engaging with the program was "better than flipping burgers" (Mike, Field notes, August 2010) and allowed students to participate in active forms of embodiment (exercise and fun activities) that were far more enjoyable than riskier, dead-end, or low-wage alternatives (Kelley, 1998). Nevertheless, amidst the ongoing and synergizing formation of the neo-liberal leviathan (Hall, 2012; Wacquant, 2013), it must also be questioned how such youth-centered initiatives reflect the emergent politics and policies of penalization within the state apparatus, particularly those of mandatory *workfare*, and *prisonfare* (Wacquant, 2010), as techniques of contemporary urban governance (Rose, 1999). While students' participation was not mandated by the state, it was indeed facilitated by the state in 2009 (the Mayor's Office for Employment Development referred some of their registered, "at-risk" high school dropouts, and unemployed young adults), and remained stringently conditional, according to the mandates of BMoreFit organizers. The disciplinary specters of this endeavor thus came up against students' own personal ambitions to seek out new pathways towards social ascendance.

David's terse comment at the start of this section is likewise suggestive of how students viewed their participation in BMoreFit as a unique opportunity to learn, gain certifications, and establish networks that could potentially lead to better, and more meaningful, forms of employment. At the time, David and I had been talking about school, and I was encouraging him to pursue a college education, and how to look for potential

scholarships. While he seemed to shrug off my suggestions at the time, we would eventually circle back to the topic following his completion of the program. As quick witted and bright as he was, I had no doubt David would find ways to be successful; with the right opportunities, he would thrive without question. With David in mind, I often thought about how Keith had negotiated his place within the first round of BMoreFit's summer training program. How had he managed to succeed so far above and beyond the rest of his peers (losing 50 lbs., and gaining a fitness certification and employment) who were most often discussed as having "behavioral problems" and had failed to meet the expectations of faculty and the Director?

In a couple conversations with Keith, I had the sense that he viewed his participation in BMoreFit as the only positive alternative for him to make a living and find happiness and success. With somewhat morbid and somber detail, Keith once simply reiterated to me that "*without BMoreFit, I'd probably be dead or locked up right now*" (Field notes, March 2010). When I asked him why he felt that way, and why he felt that BMoreFit was his only, and last, option for doing something productive and positive with his life, he suggested that, "*there aint a whole lot you can do out here, but get into trouble, and trouble everywhere. It follow you. And unless you find another way, you gonna stay in it…that's what I did*" (Field notes, March 2010). While I was unable to directly observe Keith during the 2009 program, I learned enough about that first pilot program to understand that he, more than anyone else, had figured out how to use the program to his full advantage. Despite having some disagreements with faculty, which he mentioned were the result of "typical misunderstandings" and "some narrow mindedness," (Field notes, March 2010), Keith played the "good student" role extremely well and was rewarded for it with the adulation he received for being the most powerful spokesperson for BMoreFit. He thus represented symbolically, and most effectively, through his striking

before and after photos, the potential of the program to transform "at-risk" youth into productive, hard working, and mature young adults.

BMoreFit certainly benefited from Keith's transformation, and the subsequent media attention it spawned, but Keith also made the most of the opportunity, creatively negotiating his way through a foreign environment and social context (the BAC) that, under normal circumstances (without BMoreFit), would have turned him away. In as much as students from both the 2009 and 2010 programs were exposed to the elite social context of the BAC, I found that their occasional discontent was also linked to the material realities of being in an exclusive space; of being constantly reminded that they are *visitors* to that space; that amidst wealthy white club patrons, they needed to be conscious of their behavior and gym etiquette, and perhaps above all, to constantly demonstrate an attitude of humility and gratitude for the opportunity to even be there in the first place.

"Stop tryin act White!": Resisting idealized corporealities—negotiating privileged spaces

> *"I don't wanna look like that [i.e., skinny, trim]…[motioning towards a row of white females on elliptical trainer machines] I can be healthy and be a little bigger too …"*
>
> *(Erika)*

> *"…what you mean? Like, do it bother me that everybody white in here? Naw man. I just look at it for what it is though…They got money…"*
>
> *(Mike)*

> *"no question you gotta have money to be in this place. Unless you're part of BMoreFit"*
>
> *(Iesha)*

> *My family can't afford to exercise here even if they wanted to…but it would be nice if they could give people chances to work out without the membership, like some goodwill programs or something, you know? Aint that our goal though? Get more people healthy in Baltimore?"*
>
> *(David)*

As the above quotes suggest, students were well aware that the BAC and the BMoreFit program were representative of an exclusive, wealthy, and predominantly white cultural space. In addition to students' comments to me, I also noticed a tendency for students to shy away from BAC patrons, or people unaffiliated with BMoreFit, which suggested that they had varying levels of difficulty adjusting to, and feeling comfortable within, the BAC. Part of this apprehension, I argue, stemmed from the environmental contrast and different social expectations students experienced between the BAC and other spaces of everyday life (home, school, and local community). In other words, for the short period of time that they were participants in BMoreFit, students were effectively living in two separate and unequal social worlds that were brought into sharp relief by their daily traversing of socio-spatial boundaries. Prior to their participation in BMoreFit, their usual everyday routines (school, leisure, work, recreation, etc.) occurred in surroundings more familiar to, and reflective of, Baltimore's underclass, marked by extreme segregation, and high rates of unemployment, poverty, crime, and violence. However, upon beginning their BMoreFit "program of study", students would be exposed to a new culture of fitness, within a spatial context that reflected the experiences, privileges, and opportunities afforded to the predominantly white, middle to upper classes of Baltimore. Thus, during the "work week" (Mon-Fri, 9-5) schedule of the summer training program, students entered a world of privileged leisure and recreation—replete with squash courts, smoothie bars, badminton courts, Pilate's studios, saunas, massage, and state of the art weight and cardio equipment. Such services and amenities catered to an exclusive, and predominantly white, clientele, with the means to afford the, on average, $80 monthly individual membership fees. Thus, while not purposely attempting to categorize the behavior, worldview, and habitus of the "typical" upper scale health club member, I did observe certain peculiarities that are reflective of those

with a greater distance from necessity—speech patterns, gestures, and body movements that reflect common perspectives, assumptions, and experiences with regard to exercise culture and social decorum (Bourdieu, 1984).

As one can imagine then, for students, coming from poorer environmental contexts within Baltimore City, (some experiencing broken homes and living instability), this daily contrast in scenery would not only be challenging to cope with, but would also seem to be an important issue to address within the context and purpose of the program. Nevertheless, missing the opportunity to engage with students about their lives *outside* the BAC, I argue, had an impact on how student's viewed their role *within* BMoreFit, their belief in the organization and its purpose, and contributed to a lack of meaningful dialogue and trust between students and BMoreFit organizers (faculty, board members, the director), and BAC staff. Subsequently, I noticed how this lack of common ground and experience, concomitant to an unwillingness to acknowledge and discuss the realities of social inequality as a pedagogical tool, further stifled efforts to develop in students, the desired capacities that BMoreFit deemed essential for all good fitness professionals (confidence, personality, good role model for fitness, time management skills, attention to detail, knowledgeable about the body and exercise physiology, a love of fitness and healthy living, etc.). In response to feeling pressured to accept, without question, these standard qualities and attributes, students expressed their disagreement both subtly, through sarcasm and subterfuge, and explicitly, through voicing their opinions collectively as a group.

Concerning the latter, during the course of fieldwork I observed that, in moments of conflict and disagreement between students and faculty, there seemed to be greater group cohesion amongst the students. In other words, as socially isolated as students were within the BAC space, albeit appearing to be willingly engaged in the innocuous and praiseworthy

cause of 'fitness philanthropy', they could not afford to risk being ostracized from their peer group, which was already significantly outnumbered. Importantly, this is not to imply that students blindly followed and supported their more outspoken peers (namely Asia and Mike), or that they did not engage in their own disagreements with each other. Rather, given the constraints of the program, which made participation provisional, students attempted to insulate themselves from possible reprimand, discipline, or expulsion by collectively voicing discontent and supporting each other's positions; in other words, they believed that there was strength in numbers. While such moments of collective resistance did not occur often (students were more likely to disguise their opposition and subtly mock the source of their frustrations), I did observe incidents of student protest that temporarily ruptured the taken for granted operations of power within the BAC space. Two specific episodes, detailed in my field notes, help to clarify these interpretations. Following some self-reflexive commentary to contextualize the circumstances of my interpretations in the moment, each event is reconstructed here in auto/ethnographic narrative form to describe the scene observed, those involved, what transpired, and how I perceived the events as they unfolded.

Personal Reflections from Field Notes: Reconstructing a scene of protest

June 26, 2010
It has been nearly two weeks since the start of the second round of BMoreFit's summer training program. Things are going well and I have experienced some very rich and engaging dialogue with several faculty and a few of the students. I really like this group of students too. Not only because they appear more willing to engage me in conversation than students from the 2009 program, but there is just something unique about them. They are extremely sharp and discerning. They see BMoreFit as an opportunity; a chance to connect their dreams, goals, and ambitions to their current participation in BMoreFit and what it can potentially do for them. They are here because they want to be (they were required to apply after all, following the difficulties of recruiting "at-risk" youth via state agencies in 2009). But more than all that, they strike me as having a certain degree of savvy with respect to negotiating this space, the people within it, and the regulations, scheduling, and expectations of the program. During instruction breaks, I try to gently make my way into conversations and find that most of the students engage me without hesitation, particularly David and Iesha.

July 8, 2010

In the last week or so, I have noticed some discontentment amongst the female students, in particular, that I am fairly certain is a result of their feeling pressured to conform to the bodily ideals and fitness ethics presented by faculty. A few minor expressions by female students, and my observations of them, led me towards this realization, after which it was confirmed by students' collective challenge to the Director and one faculty member. On a few occasions, I have seen the eye rolls, looks of frustration, and mumbling that appeared to be in response to something that faculty members' said. As I began to pay closer attention to these subtle gestures and coded exchanges, I noticed that Asia, Iesha, and Erika seemed to be of the same accord, sharing a tacit understanding that they would support each other's disagreements with faculty whenever comments were made that alluded to topics like, losing weight, changing body composition, shedding fat weight, or in general, controlling one's diet and exercise regimen in order to alter the appearance of the body (i.e., to get leaner, gain more muscle, etc.).

Scene #1: The first straw (July 10, 2010)

I decided to work out with the students today so I could interact with them more and hopefully have an opportunity to build more common ground. I try to appear less capable and knowledgeable about the kind of exercises Kelly (today's faculty instructor) is teaching everyone so that I can identify more with the students and their experiences, in the moment. They already know about my background in personal fitness training, but I write it off on the account that it has been years since I did that and have since forgotten. Of course, I'm not being completely forthcoming about how much I know about fitness and health. The truth is, I know exactly what's going on, and in conversations with faculty, I can easily understand and interact with them about various aspects of fitness, exercise, and physiology. I can play that role, and as a result, it's easy to gain their trust. Nevertheless, I also know I need to do everything I can to distance myself from the perception that I am part of the faculty. I need to continue building trust with students and focus on their experiences, viewpoints, and concerns.

As I continue performing the hip abduction movement Kelly is instructing everyone to do, I look over at Erika who, now looking back at me, raises a confused eyebrow and shakes her head with a subtle smile. I return the same gesture that in essence, insinuates our agreement that we are both struggling to maintain proper form during this exercise and still keep up with Kelly. Clearly we are not the only ones. Iesha nearly kicks Mike in the head and the two of them burst out laughing. "Aye girrrrllllll!!! Watch yo' self". Iesha, laughing hysterically, tells Mike "I'm sorry…but you do gotta big head though, im jus sayin." Laughter fills the room until Kelly interjects with a reminder to "stay focused" and "let's finish up this routine and then we can take a break." In the back left corner of the studio, Asia is quiet, her face stoic and emotionless. She is barely attempting to follow Kelly anymore and instead looks around the room at everyone else still attempting to follow the tempo set by Kelly. She looks frustrated to me. Kelly notices this. She turns her attention to Asia:

Kelly: That's good Asia, but lift your leg a little higher, like this.

Asia: I can't

Kelly: Yes, yes you can. Come on, I know you can do it

Asia: I'm just not like you. I cant do this!

Kelly: It's okay, its alright. It just takes time and practice…

Asia: But I don't like this. Its not working for me

Kelly: Okay, its okay [smiling]. I understand its uncomfortable right now but that's what I mean about practicing and getting better at it. After a while…

Asia: can't I just do more abs? [abdominal exercises]

Kelly: [with a puzzled half smile], well, it's important that, we want to work every part of the body to be proportioned, okay. And right now, were working on movements targeting the gluteals, so…

Asia: …but I like how my butt looks…[muffled laughter]

Kelly: ….

Silence then fills the room. Perhaps uncertain about the most appropriate way to respond to Asia's decree, Kelly feigns a passing acknowledgement of Asia's comment and quickly shifts any attention away from this side conversation by addressing the entire group once again, "good job everyone. Like I said, its important to train the body evenly and not just the parts you want to change." As she continues on, talking about the myths of "spot training" (i.e., targeting only specific parts of the body deemed to be out of proportion), I begin thinking about how Kelly and Asia each think about themselves, their bodies, and each other. Is Kelly perplexed by the idea that a young woman as large as Asia could really be comfortable and confident with her body shape and size? That she actually likes her butt just the way it is?

Out of these moments of bodily appraisal and instruction, the interactions of Asia and Kelly reveal multiple lines of intersectionality (class, race, and gender in particular) within a space that typically reflects racial homogeneity, and that, takes for granted, the gendered performance of bodies and codes of conduct that structure spaces of bodywork (Dworkin & Wachs, 2009; White, et al, 1995). In Kelly's world, from her perspective, her life experience, her epistemological assumptions, and her positionality as a college educated, middle class white female, and ardent fitness enthusiast, was it difficult to accept the idea that someone like Asia can be happy with a body that transgresses dominant notions of beauty and femininity? Did she think that deep down Asia was in fact dissatisfied with her body, and wanted to change it, but just did not want to admit it? If Kelly, like many fitness minded people I have met over the years, is of the manner of thinking that equates

happiness and self-esteem with possession of an idyllically fit body, then I would assume that she discredits Asia's stated contentment, particularly since she struck me as having little cultural competency to identify with the kind of alternative conceptions of beauty, body size and shape that Asia, and the other students, professed.

Amidst Kelly's busy schedule, I could not schedule a formal interview with her, although she was willing to talk briefly in between training sessions, on days she was scheduled to teach in the BAC. Given these constraints, Kelly's responses to my inquiries about Asia, and this incident in particular, were very terse and largely circumvented the glaring reality of how these fitness practices sometimes conflicted with students' own desires and sense of self. In particular, when I asked Kelly, "why do you think Asia is having a hard time following along with some of the training activities," she responded that "it just takes time and effort. She hasn't been exposed to these things before." "But do you think she feels pressured by all this," I responded with as genuine an intonation of curiosity I could muster to hide my barely submerged criticisms. "I don't think so. It's just a challenge to start changing your body. It's hard to work out and eat right when you first begin but it gets easier. *She just has to want it bad enough*" (Kelly, July, 2010, emphasis added). Out of our brief conversations, I found it compelling how Kelly fluidly, and most likely unconsciously, deployed neoliberal cultural perspectives and healthist ontology in her discussions of fitness, and with regard to students responsibilities to their own health (Coakley, 2011; Howell & Ingham, 2001). In her conception, the achievement of "good" health was dependent upon the individual who "just has to want it" bad enough to do what it takes to achieve a "better" body. For many people, particularly those possessing a perspective of privilege and distance from necessity (Bourdieu, 1984), it's just as simple as that.

Fitness culture then, like pop culture, represents a critical site of contestation through which neoliberal ideas of personal responsibility, self-interest, fear of government interference, and marketized measures of moral worth have been powerfully embedded and reproduced as normative and taken for granted (Coakley, 2011; Giroux, 2005; Grossberg, 1997b). The fact that BMoreFit organizers espoused the basic beliefs of neoliberal healthism corroborates the moral self-righteousness inherent to the experience of health privilege, and the perceived ability to translate their ideals unproblematically through philanthropic initiatives. The failure to acknowledge the levels of privilege and empowerment actually responsible for their own personal successes (physically and financially) thereby enables such individuals to judge the failures of the poor, unfit, unhealthy, and obese as outcomes of their own personal deficiencies, rather than having anything to do with structural inequities and poor environmental conditions (Crawford, 1977, 1980; Howell & Ingham, 2001; Ingham, 1985). As such, philanthropic efforts to improve the health and fitness of such populations are also likely to follow an individualized approach that reinforces this acontextual and ahistorical point of view. However, in seeking to ingratiate this problematic mindset amongst students, BMoreFit organizers effectively fetishized the pursuit of "good" health as an individual imperative, which, in their estimations, is independent of things like socio-spatial environment, circumstance, or subject positions such as race, ethnicity, class, education, gender, sexuality, and ability (Kowal & Paradies, 2005; Lupton, 1995). The intersectionality of these subject positions, and the manner in which they are articulated within the contextual practices and spaces of fitness culture are of critical import for understanding how to best facilitate, rather than dictate, the acquisition of knowledge to achieve an independent and healthy lifestyle (Freire, 2000; Slack, 1996). However, any considerations of the contextual contingencies of students' lived experience were largely

ignored in light of BMoreFit organizers unwavering confidence in the simplicity of fitness as a universal good.

Furthermore, throughout the rhetoric of BMoreFit, not only was race purposefully downplayed, but gender differences were sometimes overlooked in favor of simplifying a program of fitness that was applicable to *everyone* simultaneously. Conversely, BMoreFit organizers chose to occasionally deploy class status as one "acceptable" metric to explain health disparities, but the ensuing strategy to address these imbalances was to reinforce the individuals' responsibility to do all they can to overcome such unfortunate, but inevitable, class-based realities. No connection was made as to how class privilege had facilitated their own realization of possessing a fit body and financial independence, subsequently positioning them as resident "experts" and authorities on health and fitness. Meanwhile, students tended to articulate their positional differences primarily in terms of race, and how their very different racialized experiences within Baltimore, distanced them from white BMoreFit organizers. Ironically, both male and female students generally avoided discussions of gender difference. For example, when Asia voiced her disagreements about feeling pressured to change her body to look a certain way (ideals of a fit and toned body that reflect gendered patriarchy and male privilege, as much as white privilege), the manner in which the other students supported her nonetheless resulted in discussions that foregrounded the intersections of race, and to a lesser extent class, to the relative exclusion of gender dynamics. In this way, rather than risk fragmenting the group along gender lines, students', perhaps feeling more empowered by the solidarity of their own positional similarities, couched their disagreements within the more familiar, and apparent contexts of racial difference. Nevertheless, the operation of gender power remained an important

feature of BMoreFit's unintentional pedagogy, despite it not being explicitly discussed or openly acknowledged.

Kelly's body is very fit. Any part of her could be fetishized on the cover of a fitness magazine. She is, arguably, the archetype of contemporary mainstream society's (i.e., the white, Eurocentric ideal) commercialized definition of what is desirable, attractive, and sexy (Duncan, 1994; Dworkin & Wachs, 2009). She is representative of America's fascination and preoccupation with, the incessant pursuit of the perfectly tightened, toned, and proportioned body; the contemporary standard for American (white) women (Shaw, 2005). She is 'Miss America.' Conversely, Asia's body is not fit. By medical standards, she would be classified as certainly overweight, if not approaching obese according to the Body Mass Index (BMI) or other statistical measures of body composition. But Asia is not necessarily unhealthy, just full bodied and proud of it. Asia is beautiful. She is real. She is honest with herself and others. If Kelly is Cosmo, Asia is Lane Bryant. But how then does Asia interpret Kelly's appearance; her bodily habitus; her values and beliefs; the way she communicates her passion for fitness and her extensive knowledge of it; the way she speaks about her own body and how she achieved it through hard work and discipline; how she subtly intoned her assumption that *everyone* aspires, or should aspire, for a body that looks like hers? I *wanted* to ask her these questions, have a dialogue about body issues perhaps (something with which I have personal experience, see Prologue for details), and ask about her perceptions of health with respect to those of BMoreFit. However, perhaps stemming from an incident in which, Asia appeared unsatisfied with a response I gave to her public inquiry concerning the purpose of a certain BMoreFit learning activity (see chapter 4), I felt that Asia had either decided she did not like me, or at the least, did not see me as an ally like David, Erika, and Iesha did, to varying degrees. As such, Asia had no qualms about

deflecting my inquiries, although she never did it in a spiteful way. What was clear however, was that Asia did not like being told what to do, how to do it, and when to do it, particularly when it came to a bunch of privileged white adults telling her about her body, how to "change" it, and what is going to "work best" for her. Amidst these tensions, I found it better to remain an observer of some students (Asia, and to a lesser extent, Tyler), while I could more actively engage with David, Mike, Iesha, and Erika.

Scene #2: No more holding back (July 20, 2010)

In a training session about exercise physiology, Danny is talking about the various physiological transformations that occur when the body is placed under different conditions of physical output (i.e., exercise, strenuous activity) and caloric input (what you eat and how much). The entire theme of body composition has been explicit in the curriculum this week. The focus of everything seems to be geared towards motivating students to work towards, and take pride in, the capacity they have to change their physical bodies through their individual efforts. As the presentation wears on, David, Tyler, and Mike appear tired and/or bored with the current learning activity. Meanwhile, Asia, Iesha, and Erika are awake and attentive, yet their faces reveal a degree of frustration and concern. In particular, Asia, who also happens to be the largest of all the students, looks like she is ready to erupt; like she is holding back a volcano of unresolved sleights, emotions, or personal issues. I am troubled by the stern look on her face and want to know what is bothering her. I wish I could stop this session right now and talk with her. At this point, I'm sure I haven't gained enough of her trust that she would feel entirely comfortable unloading her feelings on me, but in my mind, I imagine it happening nonetheless; I want it to happen. Danny continues on and on and on. I had been listening closely to him even though I was a little bored too; I was trying to be a good example, that is, up until I saw Asia's face. I am beginning to feel restless, like something is about to happen. Everyone but Danny is awkwardly and unusually quiet. No questions or comments. No interruptions to Danny's lecture. Across the table, I catch David's eye as he slightly raises one eyebrow after glancing over at Asia and Erika. Now out of his own semi-conscious slumber (the, "I'm awake, but tuned out" kind of slumber), David has also noticed Asia's discontent. She wears it like a badge on her sleeve. She is honest, forthright, and unafraid to speak her mind. I wonder who else is picking up on this? Just then, and abruptly breaking the long silence (other than Danny's lecturing) in which everyone seemed to be on auto-pilot, Asia uncorked the proverbial volcano:

> *Danny: It is just a natural byproduct of eating healthy and exercising that you will lose weight and your body will…*
>
> *Asia: But what if I don't wanna lose weight?! [serious tone and with gusto]*
>
> *Danny: [pauses, initially appearing grateful that someone had finally made a comment] Well, I agree that losing weight should not be your*

primary goal, but, I'm just saying that it is more than likely if you do these things that your body will shed some fat weight and…

Asia: [with defiant gusto] what if I'm happy with my fat weight?! And, I don't want to change it?

Danny: [with a confused and somewhat nervous look] Okay Asia, I'm just pointing out what happens to your body physiologically when…

Asia: I hear all that. We been hearin all that. But what I'M sayin…is that I don't see anything wrong with being yourself!

At this point, everyone is at full attention, including Mike and David who had been thoroughly tuned out prior to Asia's comments. David, slouched down in his chair, is now sitting perfectly upright with elbows and arms on the table.

David: Go head Asia, we hear you!

Asia: …Why everything about changing your body, changing this, changing that? Like we aint good how we are or something?

Erika, Iesha, and David: "Uh-huh," "YES," "mmmm hmmmm," "tell it"

Asia: Cuz I know who I am and don't wanna be like somebody else, that aint me…

Clearly shocked, at a loss for words, and perhaps hoping to mitigate what seems like an impending mutiny, Danny tries to smile along with Mike and David who are now joining in on the mild provocations of Asia to continue her diatribe of previously pent up frustrations and concerns. But, it doesn't work. It is an awkward moment indeed. At least for Danny that is. The room is growing increasingly raucous and I can see the look of bewilderment and hesitation written all over Danny's face. Part of me feels sorry for him because he is bearing the brunt of Asia's frustration that has, more than likely, been brewing for some time. Danny is far from being the only faculty member to make such implications about altering one's body size and shape through diet and exercise, and the prescribed importance

of being healthy and fit; such a focus is at the core of healthism, and dominant fitness ideologies, after all. Nevertheless, I was happy that a moment of rupture had occurred and hoped it would force some much needed dialogue and reevaluation on the part of BMoreFit in terms of how they were teaching principles of health and fitness, and why students were perceiving such messages as an imposition of an idealized, and inevitably Eurocentric, bodily aesthetic (fit, muscular, toned, and/or slender).

As previously discussed with regard to students' tendency to view positional differences with faculty in terms of race, the fact that Asia used the term "we" to collectively voice her point of disagreement is both significant and telling. Already taking a risk by speaking so boldly and defiantly, Asia's critique became validated by the approval and agreement of the other students who, regardless of how personally invested they were in also refuting the emphasis on body composition, had nonetheless supported Asia wholeheartedly. Subsequently, it became a pivotal moment, which signaled their collective frustrations and the need for honest dialogue, particularly the need for BMoreFit organizers to simply acknowledge and respect the impact and significance that race, class, and cultural experience can play in their daily lives, and with regard to elite fitness practices and spaces.

The aftermath: Managing conflict—managing race

> *Race talk matters.* All Americans, every day, *are* reinforcing racial distinctions and racialized thinking by using race labels; but we are also reinforcing racial inequality by refusing to use them. By using race words carelessly and particularly by *deleting* race words, I am convinced, both policymakers and laypeople in America help reproduce the very racial inequalities that plague us. It is thus crucial that we learn to navigate together the American dilemmas of race talk and colormuteness rather than be at their mercy (Pollock 2004, p.4, *emphasis in original*).

While hopeful that the moments of resistance previously discussed would urge the Director to make some changes, both in terms of how faculty talked about body

management, and to provide the impetus to take seriously students' concerns with the racial implications of this idealized embodiment, it would prove to be futile. Immediately following students' protests, the Director tried to assuage students' concerns and get them back on schedule (a similar scenario was discussed in chapter two with the Director attempting to quell discontent following student's refusal to participate in a letter writing activity). In short, it appeared that the formal response to students' resistance was not so much to listen and negotiate, as it was to quickly remind them of their obligations and the agreements that they made prerequisite to being accepted into the program. Nevertheless, what these conflicts and protests say about the nature of students' experiences within this context, is perhaps more important than what they say about the limitations of the BMoreFit program itself.

More specifically, with the subject of race being purposefully ignored, and willfully reinforced, as a "non-issue" by faculty—despite the glaring reality that BMoreFit students disrupted the privileged social exclusivity of this space—*I found that students' tended to conceptualize and express their disagreements with faculty by alluding to racial difference, either by outright disagreement, or through the use of humor and playful mimicry. Faculty however, seemed to view, or at least express, these differences with appeals to class and age rather than race. In this sense, faculty's general lack of racial imaginary directly conflicted with students' relative lack of class imaginary in terms of how each perceived and communicated their own positional differences relative to each other.* For example, when faculty or the director discussed student performance or behavior within the program, it was often couched in language that conveniently overlooked any impact that race and racism could have on students' everyday lived experiences. The question that often perplexed me when thinking through my observations of this was how much did the faculty's insistence on making race a non-issue through colormuteness (ignoring the subject, downplaying its

significance and impact, using coded language, etc.) actually *make* it more of a salient factor in the minds of students (Pollock, 2004)? It wasn't that the topic of race came up all the time. In fact, it usually only came up in discussions about health statistics, unequal environmental conditions, and the importance of physical activity for poorer urban populations. However, when it did come up, the fact that the director and faculty appeared anxious or uncertain about how to discuss such issues, is telling. From my vantage, Talia and Sharice were the only faculty members that seemed willing to, at the very least, listen to what students had to say about race without trying to silence their frustrations by insisting upon colorblindness, or rather "colormuteness," within the boundaries of the BAC, and with regard to BMoreFit's unwavering focus on health and fitness as a universal good (Castagno, 2008; Pollock, 2004; Rodriguez, 2011). Here, an opportunity was missed to dialogue with students concerning their perceptions of, and experiences with, racism, and to connect these realities with the goals and imperatives of BMoreFit.

The detrimental silencing of race

This failure to dialogue with students about their concerns, particularly regarding the glaring, yet unspoken, reality of faculty and students' power imbalances and positional disparities linked to race and class, has a number of implications. For one, the silencing of "race talk" within a pedagogical context is particularly problematic because it reproduces structures of white privilege that deny the significance of race, uphold the myth of meritocracy, and deny institutional and systemic racism and oppression (Bonilla-Silva, 2002; Castagno, 2008). As such, in educational settings where the politics of whiteness have been upheld historically, and re-tooled in a post-civil rights era to disguise and preserve white privilege (Watkins, 2001; Winfield, 2007), the silencing of race reflects an institutional norm

that, "educators are expected to school children in the social etiquette of the dominant culture, which includes knowing what and when to raise particular issues," (Castagno, 2008, p. 325), including, most importantly, those dealing with potentially uncomfortable, and difficult topics like race and racism.

Thus, several scholars have found that educators' tendency to downplay or ignore the significance of race, "sends the message that race and racism are either nonexistent—figments, perhaps, of students' imaginations—or unnecessary topics of thought and conversation—something students use to try to divert attention or stir up controversy" (Castagno, 2008, p. 324; see also, Pollack, 2004). For white students, the subtle reinforcement of race as a non-issue teaches them how to likewise employ "coded language" to avoid being labeled as "racist" while continuing to reproduce and rationalize the normalcy of white privilege (Bonilla-Silva, 2002; Pollock, 2004; Rodriguez, 2011). Hence, white privilege is maintained by investing in an educational ideal that:

> race is not part of the accepted or expected discourse within schools. The discourse that is prevalent in schools is instead one of culture, equality, and difference— constructs that are part of the contemporary culture of Whiteness and that merely serve to obscure race, racism, and inequities based on race. The silences around race entrench and rationalize Whiteness because they allow most White educators to maintain the illusion that race either doesn't matter or doesn't really exist and to continue schooling in a business as usual fashion (Castagno, 2008, p. 315)

Similarly, in moments when the subject of race emerged during BMoreFit instructional sessions, the responses of the director and faculty revealed a generalized appeal to colorblind fitness, or as the director once put it, "fitness doesn't discriminate" (Field notes, November, 2011). Thus, for students of color then, the insistence that race does not matter is a terribly oppressive form of symbolic violence through which their experiences and feelings are denied. For BMoreFit students, the occasional surfacing of discontent, linked to the subject

of race, was met with the authoritative silencing of it as little more than a distraction from what really mattered (i.e., improving health for everyone, regardless of race), from which, students quickly learned that their appeals and concerns were not valid within this space.

Thus, aside from a few moments of rupture where I observed students vocalizing their concerns with the racial dichotomies operating within the BAC space, they tended to disguise their critiques or remain silent altogether. As noted by Tatum (1997), "Children who have been silenced often enough learn not to talk about race publicly. Their questions don't go away, they just go unasked" (p. 36). However, while BMoreFit students were certainly old enough, and savvy enough, to recognize this denial and occasionally resist it, they were also constrained by program expectations and regulations, which, for one thing, reserved the right of the director to expel any student for behavior deemed in conducive to the regimented schedule of teaching and learning. Purely focused on preparing students to pass fitness certification exams and gain employment in the fitness industry—goals that apparently required students to also learn and accept the behavioral decorum and professionalism deemed appropriate from a perspective of privileged whiteness—the topic of race was viewed as a potentially disruptive force that needed to be constantly policed and contained.

Further developing this idea of containing, and ultimately denying, the significance of "race" within this context, the continuous appeals to fitness, and developing a fit body, functioned as pedagogical mechanisms through which, what was perceived as racial pathology (ill health, disease, crime, and poverty amongst the "urban" poor) could be transcended by way of compliance with, and dedication to, corporeal prescriptions and cultural lifestyle practices reflective of middle class, whites (Endres & Gould, 2009; Feagin,

2013; Wacquant, 2007). In this way, the notion of racial supremacy becomes reformulated through a paternalistic, philanthropic imperative to transform "at-risk" or "urban" youth into "health conscious citizens" or rather, "moral subjects of responsible communities" (Rose, 2000, p. 1395; see also, Foucault, 1977, 1986). Such individuals are then urged to invest in, and subsequently reproduce, the same logics of neoliberal healthism that are more readily palatable to those with greater distance from necessity (Bourdieu, 1979), and have been socialized into, the normalized experiences and assumptions of white privilege (Feagin, 2013).

Through silence and dismissal, the topic of racism was treated as a non-issue that had little contemporary significance to BMoreFit's core ideology of fitness as a universal good. In turn, I argue that a significant portion of students' discomfort and uncertainty stemmed from this peculiar form of neglect that occurred within an otherwise tolerant, respectful, and liberal progressive atmosphere (these were well-intentioned adults giving up their time and effort to help disadvantaged youth after all). Nevertheless, culturally distant and inadequately prepared to engage in dialogue with students about such sensitive topics, this ignorance seemed only to make students even more conscious about the ways in which race is in fact, articulated to dominant meanings, embodiments, and outcomes of fitness, health, and quality of life (Williams & Collins, 2001). More specifically, from students' comments to me, and several 'moments' in which they mounted some opposition to the ideas or training of BMoreFit, it appeared that students' were perceiving the particular fitness ideology they were receiving, along with its dominant ways of thinking about and using the body, as a decidedly white cultural practice and enterprise.

Thus, while the scene previously described points as much to the issue of emphasized femininity within the masculinized contexts of fitness culture (defining what

men's and women's bodies should look like from a Eurocentric point of view; see, for example, Dworkin & Wachs, 2009; Frew & McGillivray, 2005), as it does to racial difference, students' framed, and expressed, their opposition in terms of denying what they considered to be BMoreFit's overtly "white" definition of a "fit" body. Importantly, it was the female students (Asia, Erika, and Iesha) who initially identified the imposition of a corporeal ideal that conflicted with some of the cultural expectations of their own families, and the predominantly African American communities from which they hail. More specifically, these young women were particularly attuned to BMoreFit's messages about body weight, body size, and body composition that conflicted with their own cultural images and ideals, influenced by race, gender, and sexuality. In feeling pressured to conform to what they perceived as "white" definitions of a beautiful and attractive feminine body type, they gradually mounted a collective response that demonstrated this disagreement.

Also stemming from the aforementioned incident of protest, the male students (Tyler, David, and Mike) began to involve themselves in this rejection of what they perceived to be, "mostly things that only white people do" (Tyler, personal communication, August 2010) concerning how one cares for and maintains their physical body. Thus, both male and female students began to reject the middle class, Eurocentric ideal of slender, toned, or fit muscular bodies, and assert their own definitions of health. In addition to my own observations of students' position on this issue, two interviews with Talia, revealed her situated interpretations of this phenomena and how students' perceived the body and what they placed value upon:

> *…I didn't realize that the environment that they're in, they don't want to be skinny; they want to be curvy and bigger. Like, I remember one of the girls telling me that her friend's boyfriend broke up with her because she lost weight. So, I was like, "well, this isn't really about losing weight, this is just being healthy and we're trying to help you to help your community." So, from the beginning I realized that I had to trump a lot*

> *of myths that they thought about fitness, so I didn't expect that when I started…*
>
> *(Talia, June 2010)*
>
> *They just made me see that you have to understand that "we don't want to be skinny, we want to have curves." Yes we, want to be healthy but you can't just come in here and be like, "everything you're doing is totally wrong, you're going to go nowhere fast and you're going to die, pretty much, you know, you're fat." You cant do that. I'm not saying that's what we did, but, you know…*
>
> *(Talia, September 2010)*

Corroborating my own interpretations, Talia found that the young women were particularly bothered by the imposition of a fitness culture that demanded, what they perceived to be, bodies that are skinny, toned, slender, and fit. Early on in her internship, she quickly became close to the female students, giving her a unique opportunity to learn about their concerns and experiences, yet she still suggested (following the official party line of BMoreFit rhetoric) that she needed to "trump a lot of myths" concerning how they thought about, and perceived definitions of fitness and health. A few short months later however, her reflections suggested more of a solidarity with students' perspectives because, rather than "trump myths" and teach what BMoreFit had determined to be the most "correct" form of fitness pedagogy, she professed a more empathetic understanding of students' desires. She also became more passionate about advocating for collaboration and discussion with students to better understand their concerns before making decisions that might affect them.

The fact that Talia and I both arrived at the same conclusion (i.e., that greater dialogue between students and faculty is needed to better understand student concerns and to avoid training pedagogies that impose bodily ideals and normative standards) was reassuring to me because it meant that, despite occupying very different roles within BMoreFit, we had each observed forms of student discontent, listened to what they had to

say, and had interpreted the outcomes of these issues as the result of programmatic deficiencies (lack of dialogue, failure to work alongside students, cultural unawareness, etc.). However, while I suggest that student concerns about racism and health outcomes could have been more productively engaged and discussed as a significant element, and contributing factor to fitness and health injustice within Baltimore city, there is more to consider here than just how BMoreFit failed to address these issues. At a broader level, students' refusal to accept and internalize the bodily ideals reflective of most BAC members and BMoreFit faculty, is linked to the cultural expectations and racialized assumptions they encounter in their daily lives. For example, Talia also suggested that some students felt compelled to eschew making healthy decisions (choosing to eat healthy foods or exercising regularly) because such behaviors are more commonly associated with, and subsequently are perceived to be, a distinctively "white" thing to do:

> *I feel like whenever they try to come out of their current status that they're in, their friends tend to be really negative about it. Because one of the kids, [David], he was sharing with me in the middle of the program, they were learning about healthy things to eat, and he went out and he told me that he ordered a salad and one of his friends was like, "man, why you trying to act white?" like you know, and he was just like, "I don't understand, its just so hard for me. I want to eat healthy but then they're telling me that I'm being a white guy" and you know, so, I feel that's another factor that influences what they think about fitness and health*
>
> *(Talia, September, 2010)*

Talia's account of her exchange with David also reveals some important issues. First, Talia was the only faculty member to gain enough trust and rapport with students to permit a sensitive exchange of information like this. The director, board of directors, and faculty either ignored, or had little clue, that students might actually be dissuaded from applying what they learned due to the fear of being taunted by their peers for "acting white." Further, it was only after Talia brought up the subject, in a meeting with the director, that a concerted

effort was made by the director to address such concerns. Subsequently, in a very awkward address to students, the director alluded to racial inequality and injustice, only to quickly reinforce the counter idea that, unlike society at large, "fitness doesn't discriminate" and that "it's not about race, its about fighting childhood obesity in Baltimore" (Field notes, Director, July 2010). Thus, the director's well-intentioned, yet misguided, appeals to a, "colorblind fitness" pedagogy effectively served to briefly bring up the issue, on his terms, and quickly dispel it again, thereby silencing any meaningful negotiation with David's, and others, experiences. Instead, it appeared that the purpose of discussing the topic was not so much out of concern for the students per se, but rather the preeminent concern with their transformation; reflecting a results-driven focus that praises the ability of learners to accept, conform, and reproduce the same set of skills and knowledge that fetishizes fitness and exercise culture as a private good.

Within the context of philanthropy then, and from the dominant perspective of privileged whites, these young people were identified as being in need, of being underprivileged, and widely perceived as a problem that required the attention and efforts of reformers (i.e., fitness professionals who, from their perspective, possess the "Truth" about the body and seek to correct lifestyle behaviors in order to produce a healthier population). As such, a highly structured, goal-oriented, and highly regulated space of fitness pedagogy was formulated and put into action without any dialogue and/or engagement with the target population. Power and control remained firmly in the hands of those running the program, and when it was not very successful the first time around, it was determined that the problem had to do with students' "behavioral problems" rather than anything to do with the structure or delivery of the program. This general sentiment amongst BMoreFit staff also congealed into assumptions about why students were not excelling and taking ownership of

the program. From their perspective, students were not taking seriously the fact that they were being provided with, "an opportunity of a lifetime" (Director, September, 2010) and all the very best in terms of cutting edge knowledge from fitness professionals in the field, and the use of state of the art equipment in the BAC. At times expressing confusion as to why students were not embracing this "unique" opportunity, some of the consensus, amongst faculty, was that students were just "ungrateful," "had poor attitudes," a "bad work ethic," or "were just inadequately prepared for classroom instruction" (Field Notes, Faculty and Director comments, Noted between June-Aug 2010).

Subsequently, what I found was that students were sometimes misunderstood, both within the context of their daily participation in BMoreFit activities, but even more critically, misunderstood and overlooked with regard to their lives outside the physical boundaries of the BAC. In other words, it was expected that once students entered the BAC, they were in effect, donning the uniform and taking on the name associated with BMoreFit as a representative of the organization. Anything going on in students' personal lives was supposed to take a back seat to the immediate concern of giving 100% effort in training sessions. And while this may have been an understandable, indeed normalized, mandate from the point of view of authority figures, not unlike the expectations of most schoolteachers or employers for example, the inability or unwillingness to open up a space for collaborative effort, constructive dialogue, and shared understanding ensured that these vulnerable young people would remain the *targets* of philanthropic intervention, rather than active *participants* in a community-based non-profit organization.

Reflecting the traditional form and function of public education, the structure of BMoreFit emphasized a top down transfer of knowledge (from instructor to student), and disciplinary measures to ensure "appropriate" behavior. In this regard, the dominant

discourse of BMoreFit was thus rooted in a denial of historical material circumstance, in favor of a simple egalitarian logic that assumes that fitness doesn't discriminate and that everybody can be healthy if they just put forth the effort. Rather than encourage discussion of students' lives (no doubt influenced and impacted by structures of inequality and poor environmental conditions that affect health outcomes), and seek to make connections there with the purposes and goals of BMoreFit, students were simply expected to listen, learn, and be able to apply the training they had received.

What was troubling to me in this regard, was that students were reminded to "take ownership" of BMoreFit, and fully invest themselves in the program, so that they can most effectively learn, embrace, and apply the prescribed fitness instruction techniques to advocate for healthy change in their own communities (i.e., instilling a philanthropic mindset). However, with that being a primary purpose and goal, I could not grasp why so little attention was paid to discussing, engaging, and understanding students' own experiences with regard to the communities they were being "trained" to help? Following the work of Donovan & Bransford (2005), research in cognitive and learning sciences suggests that effective learning "involves the active construction of ideas within cultural contexts," which means that, since students use their everyday lived experience at home, and in their local communities, to make sense of ideas encountered in the classroom, utilizing those experiences and forging connections between school and home life can be a crucial resource for effective learning (Villegas, Strom, & Lucas, 2012, p. 287). In a Freirian sense, this reflects the kind of learning process that empowers individuals and seeks to facilitate their own unique pathway to meaningful knowledge, leading to action, and positive social change. And while BMoreFit had good intentions for wanting to teach fitness industry standards—the expectation being that program graduates will utilize their newfound

knowledge to enact positive healthy and fitness oriented social change within their own communities—the fact that community members, and the students themselves, were not included in decision making processes, or consulted about their everyday lived experiences and concerns pertaining to individual and community health, suggests that BMoreFit leadership considered their fitness pedagogy to be universally correct and applicable.

Further, because the director, faculty, and board of directors shared little in common with students in terms of lived experience, and were relatively isolated from the socio-spatial contexts of Baltimore's underclass, I suggest that this lack of familiarity (combined with some racial ambivalence and subtly intoned and decontextualized racial pathologizing of students' behaviors) precluded faculty from discussing the connections between students' lives at home and what they were being expected to learn in the BAC. Again, *this represents another area of programmatic oversight that I argue is linked to the failure to invite, consult with, recruit, and incorporate, faculty members of color and/or a greater diversity of vantage points and lived experiences relative to the urban underclass, including experience with issues of racism, injustice, and disparity*. Further, it represents a fundamental flaw within voluntary sector efforts that target poorer communities of color, because they are often created, and led, by groups of people that, while well-intentioned and possessing the means to engage in philanthropic efforts, often do not share similar backgrounds to those they help, may view and treat those they help as less-than, and are more likely to encounter cultural barriers, misunderstandings, and ineffective communication as a result of differing socio-spatial, racial/ethnic, and classed experiences (Endres & Gould, 2009; Kowal & Paradies, 2005; Villegas, Strom, & Lucas, 2012). Quite simply, the dearth of faculty or board members of color within BMoreFit had a very tangible impact on both the decision-making processes leading to an established curriculum and program design, as well as the quality of students' learning outcomes and experiences in the

program. In effect then, the program structure reflected the concerns, understandings, imperatives, and outlook of the faculty, rather than a programmatic outline forged from consultations with, and engagement with local educators, leaders, parents, and working professionals of color who, being more knowledgeable about the experience of systemic racism and it's a/effects within post-industrializing Baltimore, could have provided the perspective, understanding, and support that students needed.

If an effective feedback channel had been established that permitted discussion of potentially sensitive and personal topics relevant to students' lives, there might have been tremendous opportunity to link their specific experiences with poverty, crime, and ill health with the curricular instruction they were receiving and the broader philanthropic aims of BMoreFit. In effect, this was what I attempted to do with the students myself though the Photovoice methodology although it did not take hold the way I had hoped (see chapter four). It should also be noted that although the Director tried assiduously to offer his support to students (often offering to talk with them privately about problems at home or with school), it seemed that there were too many barriers (social, racial, contextual, cultural, etc.) preventing students from fully accepting this offer of support. Many times, as I sat observing and reflecting on what I had become a part of, I could not help but feel discouraged with the thought that students could not feel entirely comfortable within the context of this program. Without question, the director had good intentions for creating BMoreFit, but the more time I spent observing its programmatic execution, the more I had the nagging thought that the program's ambitious goal-orientation (pressured by the results-driven influence of the Board) was taking precedence over the students themselves. Nevertheless, as much as I found it difficult to see beyond the ways in which BMoreFit functioned as a disciplinary institution to mold this group of students into ambitious fitness

professionals, I tried to remain conscious of each individual students' agency, their capacity for subtly influencing the ebb and flow of the program, and the potential they had to leverage this experience for their own benefit.

Towards an inclusive multicultural fitness pedagogy

As a continual theme throughout this project, the cultural barriers emanating from the divergent socio-spatial experience and identities of faculty and students made meaningful communication and shared understanding difficult when it came to matters of race, ethnicity, and cultural difference. As a result, this lack of trust, or inability to see beyond the differences that separated them, contributed to a formality of participation that positioned faculty as the disseminators of knowledge, and students as the passive recipients, albeit creatively negotiating their participation as a means to an end. Students invariably occupied a precarious position as disadvantaged youth in a program operated by privileged adult authority. As such, I have previously discussed the manner in which these authority figures displayed their physical capital and reinforced dominant fitness pedagogies, how students responded to such pedagogies, and how communication was affected by this overall lack of shared experience and understanding. It was also noted that, at its core, this disconnect stemmed from the stark social cleavages existing between faculty and students' everyday lived experience outside the BAC. In short, the severely polarized class experiences, and socio-spatial isolation of faculty and students, in some cases, prevented the finding of common ground, which, if established, could have led to greater trust, and meaningful learning.

Thus, while I am not wont to suggest that underprivileged youth of color need to be taught by someone they can identify with by sharing their exact ethnic/racial or class

background, *I do however suggest that, at a minimum, commonalities (whether they be experiential, positional, or cultural) and points of mutual interest and understanding are critical for enabling honest and productive dialogue to occur, and for tailoring programming to the needs of students, rather than the ambitions of well intentioned, privileged philanthropists.* I also suggest that, in fact, it would be helpful for youth of color to see at least some faces of adult authority that they can identify with and see themselves in. As Villegas, Strom, and Lucas (2012) suggest, "when students fail to see minority adults in professional positions and instead see them overrepresented in the ranks of non-professional workers, they implicitly learn that white people are better suited than people of color to hold positions of authority in society" (p. 285). They also argue that because many students of color come from impoverished backgrounds and rarely see successful professionals that share their racial and/or ethnic background, the exposure to teachers of color can be a significant motivating force that disrupts alienation and encourages students to strive for social and academic success (p. 285). In as much as the director and faculty endlessly toiled over how to get the students to take ownership of BMoreFit and see themselves as fitness professionals and representatives of the organization, the ambivalence of students may be partly explained by the fact that they had difficulty identifying with the director, board, and faculty.

Again, I am not suggesting the primacy of race as the only determining factor here, but rather, recognizing that, "people of color are uniquely positioned to promote learning for students of color because they tend to bring to teaching an understanding of students' cultural backgrounds and experiences" (p. 286). Nevertheless, acknowledging that people have multiple identifications (Essed, 1994), effective teaching and communication with underprivileged minority youth is not simply a matter of pairing them with an instructor sharing their same ethnic or racial background. As noted previously, BMoreFit retained the

services of one African American female faculty member (Sharice) who, while occupying a very different class position and having been socialized within greater proximity to predominantly white, middle class communities, did demonstrate the potential to gain students' trust and encourage their full participation more effectively than her white counterparts. As Villegas, Strom, & Lucas (2012) would argue, this demonstrates that while teachers of color can "vary widely in their familiarity with the backgrounds and experiences of racial/ethnic minority students they teach" (p. 287), they are still more likely to understand, and identify with, the experience of racism and ethnocentrism in society and other aspects of being "black" within a highly segregated and unequal US context (Miller & Endo, 2005; Milner, 2006; Quiocho & Rios, 2000).

The fact that David felt comfortable sharing his experience with Talia also suggests the extent to which the mutual experience of being a racial/ethnic minority, particularly in an isolated and unequal environment, can facilitate meaningful exchange. In this particular scenario, the fact that Talia grew up in white middle class neighborhoods in the US, and was, at the time, attending a Division I University, did not trump the fact that her ethnic identity (Pacific Islander) also made her an ethnic minority in the BAC space. She was one of only two minority faculty members, and since she was present in the BAC far more frequently than Sharice, students tended to discuss issues related to race with her far more frequently and openly than anyone else. After reviewing my field notes, and reflecting on Talia's observations, I was able to see how BMoreFit, in some ways, resembled the systems and logics of white-controlled institutions of education (Watkins, 2001), revealing synergies of white paternalism, traditional teacher authority, and embodied politics of middle class individualism and lifestyle management (Endres & Gould, 2009; Kirk, 2006; Lipsitz, 2006; Pollock, 2004). Students' unwillingness to accept unreservedly, the particular ideals,

concepts, and values of personal fitness so dearly upheld by faculty, is likewise suggestive of how the program sought to disseminate fitness knowledge unilaterally and without consideration for the particular experiences of young people affected by racial inequalities.

Importantly, David's experience of being teased for doing something, perceived to be, a "white thing" (ordering a salad), is microcosmic of a larger, and quite significant, barrier to the improvement of health outcomes within poorer, and highly segregated, communities of color. Similar cultural barriers manifest in educational settings where young black men, pressured to adopt a "cool pose" (Majors & Billson, 1992) to preserve a protective exterior image of toughness and style, eschew aspirations of academic success because it has typically represented, and been associated with, white controlled institutions serving only the interests of white America, to the exclusion of all others (Pollock, 2004; Watkins, 2001). Students, for their part, did not want to be seen as having "sold out" by participating in activities, or making decisions, that are more commonly associated with the experience and social position of privileged whites. Thus, while they clearly acknowledged the positive aspects of their participation in BMoreFit and the potential it gave them to succeed, there remained an ambivalence or apprehension about fully embracing the organization and its purpose. Quite simply, students never felt, and therefore never became, incorporated by BMoreFit as more than just the recipients of the organization's charitable efforts. In word, they were frequently asked to "take ownership," and represent the organization as participating members, but in reality, the imposition of rules, regulations, and a highly structured curriculum, preparatory for students to extend the philanthropic reach of BMoreFit into their own low-income communities, served to show these young people, in deed, *what really mattered most to BMoreFit organizers*.

> In a society deeply troubled by their presence, youth prompts in the public imagination a rhetoric of fear and disdain that is increasingly being translated into social policies that signal the shrinking of democratic public spheres, the high jacking of civic culture, and the increasing militarization of public space…Instead of providing a decent education to poor and minority youth, we serve them more standardized tests; Instead of guaranteeing them food, decent health care, and shelter, American society offers them the growing potential of being incarcerated, buttressed by the fact that the U.S. is one of the few countries in the world that sentences minors to death and spends "three times more on each incarcerated citizen than on each public school pupil;"[4] instead of providing them with vibrant public spheres, we offer them a commercialized culture in which consumerism is the only obligation of citizenship; instead of providing young people with decent housing, we give excessive tax cuts to the rich, tax cuts that could easily provide crucial aid to the 11 million children who live in poverty, the 8.4 million who lack health insurance, the 5.6 million young people who are out of work and hope, and the more than 1.35 million children who are homeless at some point each year. While the United States ranks first in military technology, military exports, defense expenditures and the number of millionaires and billionaires, it is ranked 18th among the advanced industrial nations in the gap between rich and poor children, 12th in the percent of children in poverty, 17th in the efforts to lift children out of poverty, and 23rd in infant mortality (Giroux, 2003, p. 1)

While there have long been fears and crises associated with, and directed at, youth culture for its, real or perceived, rebelliousness and anti-establishment attitudes and practices within American society (Giroux, 2012; Grossberg, 2005), this often inflated and hyper-mediated concern towards the future of America's youth becomes particularly volatile and panic-inducing when directed towards underprivileged minority youth. As Giroux suggests, within an atmosphere of increasing emphasis on surveillance, crime prevention, and the incessant securitization of space, "young people, especially those who are poor, are no longer considered **in need of help** in a society marked by deep racial, economic and social inequalities, instead they have become **the problem**" (Giroux, 2003, p. 2, bold in original). This redefinition can be traced to the proliferation of neoliberal ideologies and public policies which have increasingly manifest in the fact that, as Oyeleye (2014) suggests,

> Education and early employment – two primary channels through which young people are integrated into society – have been negatively impacted by major spending cuts to public services, as prescribed by a neoliberal agenda, and exacerbating the plight of the youth. Inadequate responses from the political establishments, which seemingly fail to grasp, or care for, the crisis that their policies have helped to create, have only served to exacerbate the feelings of uncertainty, frustration, insecurity and anger among the youth across the world (p. 63)

Thus, when viewed, and routinely discussed, as part of a "problem" requiring the attention and interventions of "responsible adults," the manner in which youth issues are addressed, often becomes focused on the real or perceived threat of individual pathology (crime, drug abuse, welfare dependency, etc.) rather than the historical and material conditions (hyper-segregation, unemployment, poverty, racial discrimination, poor educational systems, etc.) and policy shifts, actually responsible for such outcomes for youth. Furthermore, this preoccupation with demonizing and criminalizing youth, particularly poor, minority youth in urban environments, equates more to a view of youth as either a threat in need of correction, or a resource for the continued expansion of the prison-industrial-complex, than as a human life in need, and deserving of, respect, educational opportunities, and positive forms of social cultivation (Giroux, 2003; Oyeleye, 2014).

What kind of message is being sent to America's youth when this "class and racial war being waged against young people is most evident in the ways in which schools are being militarized with the addition of armed guards, barbed-wired security fences, and "lock down drills" (Giroux, 2003, p. 2). As educators turn over their responsibility for school safety to the police, the new security culture in public schools has turned them into "learning prisons" (Chaddock, 1999, p. 15; quoted in Giroux, 2003). This aspect of urban governmentality (Rose, 1999) has continued to proliferate as more and more public institutions take on the governing logics of neoliberalism in which individualism, hyper-competitiveness, and draconian forms of discipline conspire to ensure the continued and

deepening bifurcations of class and race. In particular, and moving into the sphere of physical culture, the provision of public recreation, physical activity, health, fitness, nutrition, and sport have likewise mirrored the general trends and shifts in public policy and urban governance in an era of post-industrialization, neoliberalization, suburbanization, gentrification, and hyper-segregation (Pitter & Andrews, 1997; Wacquant, 2009). Under this formulation, responsibility for the health and wellness of the public (through forms of recreation, sport, fitness, etc.) fell increasingly under the purview of the individual citizen and their capacity to consume various products and services within an emerging cultural economy of fitness and health (Howell & Ingham, 2001). Amidst the marketization, and rampant commodification, of fitness and health in American society then, the patterns of social division and disparity has made the emergence of a voluntary sector for fitness and health a necessity, through which people are effectively being taught how to exercise their individual freedoms as consumers within a free market system that has left them behind (Dean, 2010). As funding for recreation and parks, public services, and so forth have continued to dwindle—a scenario that is particularly catastrophic for urban communities that already face significant material and environmental barriers to living a healthy and active lifestyle—there have been numerous and varied responses to this neoliberal ideological and policy shift, often finding traction by developing interventionist programs that target the most vulnerable and impressionable populations; namely, young people in underserved, low-income areas.

For the young people recruited by BMoreFit to participate in their 2009 and 2010 summer training programs, receiving a modest wage to learn about, and practice, aspects of physical fitness and health during the summer months was viewed as a great opportunity. More specifically, it represented a chance to do something other than "hangin' in the

streets", "flippin' burgers", or "cleanin' out toilets" which, as students' reiterated to me at different times, seemed to represent their dominant perceptions concerning the possibilities and potential they had to find meaningful employment, or something productive to do with their time when school was out (Field notes, Summer 2010). In as much as youth increasingly occupy a position of uncertainty and hopelessness in a society that has denied their voice, stripped their rights, hallowed out their social protections, and criminalized even the most trivial actions and behaviors within a school system that more closely resembles penal institutions (Giroux, 2009, 2012; Grossberg, 2005), young people today are part of an expendable generation that, like the BMoreFit students I had the pleasure of working with, recognize the barriers of inequality they face but choose to "keep it moving" in terms of finding new and creative ways to make it out; it is really the only thing they can do (see, for example, Kelley, 1997a, 1997b; Oyeleye, 2014).

Nevertheless, historically viewed as a troubled population in need of harsher, adult-like disciplinary measures and interventionist practices, the 'problem' of youth is most often "conceived in terms of their individual deficiencies: poor attitudes to schooling, training and work; lack of aptitude and skills; and their 'risky' and 'anti-social' behavior (Cooper, 2009, p. 81). As Grossberg (2005) suggests, we have reached a point where it has become more commonplace to, "think of kids as a threat to the existing social order and for kids to be blamed for the problems they experience. We slide from kids in trouble, kids have problems, and kids are threatened, to kids as trouble, kids as problems, and kids as threatening" (p. 16). As such, much social policy concerning youth matters has been rooted in the positivistic sciences that correlate behavioral problems with biological or psychological defects, rather than the outcomes of environmental conditions and shifting modalities of governance (Cooper, 2008, 2009).

More specifically, the broad 21st century disinvestment in youth reflects more generally, the abandonment of Keynesian social policy that once provided youth with assurances for a stable future, a safety net for troubled times, and basic access to healthcare, education, employment, housing, and transportation (Giroux, 2009, 2012; Grossberg, 2005). In its place, a new social order of neoliberal governance prioritizes the control and discipline of youth populations (a management approach) rather than support and education, particularly for those young people already marginalized by class and color (Cooper, 2009; Giroux, 2009, 2012). As the opening quote to this section suggests, the staggering number of youth in poverty, homeless, lacking health insurance, a decent education, and/or incarcerated, reflects the tragic outcomes of an individualist, hyper-competitive, and market-driven political order that favors short-term capital accumulation more than long-term investments in humanity (Giroux, 2012; Harvey, 2000, 2001). Within this context, urban youth face almost insurmountable odds that become further compounded by the shifting priorities of an increasingly securitized and carceral state that views young black and brown bodies as 'dangerous', 'pathological' and 'deviant' threats to 'civil' society (Giroux, 2012).

More to the point, and with rejoinder to Giroux's (2009) concept of the youth crime complex, an insidious politics of disposability has emerged in which the prison, and other punitive and disciplinary institutions, conspire to contain and punish youth of color, thereby depriving them of organic childhood experience and the possibility for a meaningful future (Mbembe, 2003). In extending all the policies of a repressive state apparatus toward the governance of minors, the various wars on crime, drugs, and juvenile delinquency share a common impetus to target poor bodies of color, rendering them as the disposable fleshy material through which the prison industrial complex finds its source of profit (Giroux, 2006a, 2009, 2012; Mbembe, 2003). As a major organizing principle of contemporary urban

governance, "crime now becomes an excuse not only to expand modes of security, surveillance, and control throughout society, but also to retool the inheritances of racism through a mode of governance that takes as one of its objectives the punishing, if not removal from the social body, of poor black and brown youth" (Giroux, 2009, pp. 81-82). Quite simply, we are witnessing a moment in which the modalities of discipline and punishment are being applied preemptively and with specific social purpose to contain, control, profit from, and eliminate marginalized youth populations; viewed as disposable bodies and/or resources for the prison industrial complex (Hartmann, 2001; Hartmann & Depro, 2006; Mbembe, 2003).

However, amidst this broadly accepted form of viewing, and thus governing, urban youth as little more than the potential, even inevitable, threats to a social order that is reproduced upon the foundations of white power and privilege, what role is being played by the voluntary sector and organizations devoted to the rehabilitation of these same young people? Can efforts to educate, provide assistance, and remove barriers for underserved urban youth counteract and oppose these broader systems of oppression? It is my contention that, while well-intentioned and certainly laudable in providing opportunity for a few, many of these efforts do little to challenge the neoliberal policies and attitudes that make punishment and discipline appear as the only option for addressing the perceived pathologies of "urban" youth. As such, I argue that such pedagogical efforts do little but corroborate the elusive normativity of institutionalized racism, albeit in the more paternalistic, 'friendly faced' form of philanthropic intervention which underpins the individualizing, and indeed, neoliberal multiculturalism (Melamed, 2006; Winfield, 2007). To this degree, it is worth quoting Giroux (2009) at length:

> Youth marginalized by class and color can no longer inhabit public spheres that allow them to take refuge behind their status as developing children

> worthy of adult protection and compassion. Whether it be the school, the community center, the street corner, or their place of residence, the most powerful and influential forces shaping their lives emanate from the security state and the criminal justice system. Increasingly, there are more police in their schools than teachers, more surveillance cameras in their neighborhoods than public spaces that afford privacy and meaningful social interactions, and more liquor stores than health centers, community outreach centers, and recreational centers combined. The racialized spaces of oppression that poor youth of color inhabit make a mockery of the much-vaunted claim that the election of Barack Obama to the presidency suggests that institutionalized racism is over. *In a neoliberal political order, with its celebration of radical individualism, privatization, and deregulation, any invocation of race can only be affirmed as a private prejudice, decoupled from wider institutional forces. This depoliticizing and privatizing of racism makes it all the more difficult to both identify the racialized attacks on poor youth of color* and take the kind of action that would dismantle the systemic conditions that promote such practices of exclusion and disposability (p. 18, *emphasis added*)

While it is generally accepted that young people are more impressionable, vulnerable, and in need of positive support and encouragement from adults, when it comes to poor black youth (those facing far greater barriers and systemic injustices than their white counterparts), such ideas seem to vanish with the popular racialized perception that delinquency amongst this population is somehow inherent and natural (hooks, 1994; Kelley, 1997a; Macek, 2006; Winfield, 2007). Subsequently, this perception lends support to the idea that corrective efforts must include, and cannot be successful without, the imposition of harsh disciplinary action, zero-tolerance behavioral policies, and re-education efforts (Grossberg, 2005). The capitalist motivations for racial liberalism in late 20th century American politics (Melamed, 2006) certainly underpin today's privatized efforts to selectively address health disparities amongst minority populations. In other words, in continuously seeking to demarcate "healthy" African American culture from "black pathology" (Melamed, 2006), "good blacks" from "bad blacks" (Wilson, 1997), the white paternalistic imposition of pedagogical interventions serve less to eradicate inequitable conditions of racialized health disparity, than

it does to justify neoliberal multiculturalism and deny the material impacts of race and class (Bonilla-Silva, 2002).

Further, in as much as Giroux (2009) suggests a connection between disciplinary governance systems and the re-tooling of racism, the philanthropic targeting of poor minority communities carries the problematic potential to (re)produce racialized assumptions and perpetuate misunderstandings, between givers and receivers, because such groups are often so thoroughly polarized (Endres & Gould, 2009). As such, elements of the "hard racial frame" (Feagin, 2005), and all the historical assumptions of race-based thinking that it perpetuates, become recalibrated and normalized within the contexts of crime, juvenile delinquency, and institutions of rehabilitation and discipline. It is precisely with respect to this latter point that I want to make explicit the tendency for non-profit organizers to reproduce these logics (intentionally and/or by chance or circumstance) and thereby reinforce a system of governance that accepts as its raison d'être, the control, containment, and reformation of poor bodies of color (Cooper, 2009; Hartmann, 2001; Pitter & Andrews, 1997). Specifically with regard to BMoreFit then, there were several aspects of the program that reflected racialized assumptions, and subsequently demonstrate linkages to the politics of white privilege that structured the conditions for participation, educational curriculum, and regulations governing "appropriate" (read: white middle class) behavior.

As the precursor to the establishment of such codes of conduct, I found that the initial formulation of BMoreFit, its specific focus and mission, set the stage for developing the programmatic approach that would be employed to educate and discipline the young people recruited into it. For example, it was previously discussed that the BMoreFit program was created in response to the Director's participation in a Baltimore City police community seminar on gang violence and drugs. Hence, the very impetus to act and

organize efforts to provide young people with a positive learning experience were borne out of the desire to mitigate the proliferation of gangs, drugs, and social "undesirables" pouring over into the more affluent, securitized, and decidedly white, urban peripheries (Squires & Kubrin, 2005; Williams & Collins, 2001). Or, as the Director intimated, "*I was in a neighborhood presentation given by the Baltimore City police on gang violence because I live in a neighborhood that's on the edge and often you get people walking through the neighborhood who look a little shady*…" (Director, Personal communication, March, 2010). The fact that such perceivably "shady" people—a polite euphemism for whom, it can be assumed, given the context of our discussion, were most likely young black men—were viewed as potential threats in need of reformative efforts and/or disciplinary measures to keep them out of such spaces, speaks to the lingering specters of racial segregation within American cities, and amongst even the most well-intentioned and seemingly progressive members of society (Hartmann, 2001; Hartmann & Depro, 2006; Omi & Winant, 1994; Pietila, 2010; Squires & Kubrin, 2005).

Further, the Director's remark, that he wanted to, "*take my years of fitness experience and be able to create gangs of fitness ambassadors who could create healthier cities versus tear them apart*" (Personal communication, March, 2010), likewise suggests how reformers and philanthropists might be discerning the state of youth within urban America, and how to "appropriately" address them. Without the capacities, or the impetus, to significantly alter the material conditions and environments shown to produce the kind of outcomes they are seeking to modify (crime, delinquency, poor health, etc.), proposed solutions most often proceed within the dominant neoliberal framework that seeks creative individualized solutions to complex social problems (Howell & Ingham, 2001). Subsequently, and given the entrenchment of neoliberal thinking within mainstream fitness and exercise culture, the dominant healthist ideology of such groups reproduces the problematic view that poor

health outcomes are simply the result of individual pathology, and that the most effective way to mitigate such pathology, is to target particular individuals with various physical activity-based pedagogical initiatives (Cole, 1996; Cooper, 2009; Crawford, 1980). From this frame of reference, the Director's vision for intervention was influenced both by a broad perception of urban communities, and his own personal belief in the power of individual effort; fitness being the cornerstone of that foundation. In this line of thinking, the "uneducated," "lazy," "drug addicted," and "hand-out taking" residents of Baltimore just needed to "take it into their own hands to improve themselves" and stop costing the state so much in healthcare and social services (Director, Field Notes, April 2010).

Furthermore, and since fitness, according to BMoreFit rhetoric, is apparently free and readily available no matter where you live, there is no excuse for not being physically active, not even a lack of money or resources to participate in activities of physical self-betterment. Such a logic denies the iniquitous processes of deindustrialization, the dismantling of the welfare state, and decimation of forms of mass employment for the "urban" poor, actually responsible for the contemporary state of youth who, lacking opportunities in education and employment, are rendered "disposable" and/or a "burden" on society (Giroux, 2012; Massey & Denton, 1998; Wacquant, 2009). Never mind the pronounced lack of public resources for physical activity, and the fractured socio-spatial landscapes of wealth and poverty that segregate communities and limit access to the very spaces and material goods that would support broad improvements in community health (Marmot, 2004; Wacquant, 2007). Within a neoliberal mindset, corroborated by all the assumptions and privileges of whiteness, such an attitude, I argue, reflects a dominant cultural logic amongst privileged, and predominantly white communities, that the urban poor have somehow brought all this devastation upon themselves (Feagin, 2010, 2013); as if the

historical patterns of racial inequity and discrimination in housing, employment, education, and so forth, had no impact upon the contemporary apartheid of the urban metropolis (Orser, 1994; Pietila, 2010; Wacquant, 2007, 2009; Wacquant & Wilson, 1989). From such a perspective, individuals can acknowledge the existential reality of racist lending practices, the iniquitous segregationist processes of redlining and blockbusting (Orser, 1994; Pietila, 2010), white flight, urban disinvestment, de-industrialization, neoliberalization, gentrification, securitization, and the criminalization of the urban poor, while still maintaining the puerile neoliberal position that personal responsibility can overcome any and all of these obstacles. Further, it assumes that such material and social barriers have nothing to do with the jarringly disparate health outcomes, mortality rates, and quality of life experienced by the dispossessed throng of Baltimore's predominantly African American, urban underclass (Harvey, 2001; Silk, 2010; Silk & Andrews, 2006; Silk & Amis, 2005).

From these assumptions, it is conceivable why the director, and board members, of the BMoreFit program were so unequivocally devoted to reforming the perceived "pathology" of urban youth through the disciplinary regimes of fitness and health. Not only would the physical bodies of students be subjected to modalities of surveillance and objective measurement, but the very behavior, attitudes, speech, and thinking of students would be appraised, evaluated, and if needs be, disciplined and corrected, in order to inculcate the desired response; to create "fitness ambassadors" who could reproduce the same pedagogies of fitness and health that proponents of BMoreFit hold as unwavering truisms. Subsequently, with the imposition of formal instruction and training, a highly controlled and contained environment, and a disciplinary structure designed to prevent dissidence and inculcate a more "desirable attitude" conducive to fitness and health

professions (see chapter two), students were often compelled to negotiate their participation in BMoreFit through creative means of resistance.

Conclusion: "Let me show you what I mean": On the potential of Photovoice

I opened this chapter with an important exchange between David and I that alludes to a key point of division between faculty and students' views concerning health. While my purpose was not to simply expose how different faculty and students were with respect to their positional subjectivities and lived experiences, it was nonetheless a critical factor that revealed deep-seated tensions and anxieties concerning how race, ethnicity, class, age, environment, education, and culture impact upon, and shape, lived experience and health outcomes. For example, David's observation—that the Director viewed the mission and purpose of the BMoreFit program (reducing childhood obesity and improving the health or urban populations) as a simple matter of educating the public by training underprivileged youth to carry the message—draws attention to the way particular assumptions manifested themselves through the pedagogical and programmatic nature of BMoreFit. Namely, it was expected that students would embrace the purpose and philosophy of BMoreFit because its ultimate mission was to help improve the health of people from students' own communities. This assumption, in of itself, is problematic not least because it places a tremendous amount of undue pressure upon a small group of young people to be the saviors of fitness for their own neglected communities. However, when students did not seem overly enthusiastic and excited about the potential of BMoreFit (including themselves, as representatives) to improve health and fitness levels in their communities, the director and faculty largely interpreted this as a puzzling sign of indifference.

Apparently, the fact that these young people (the recipients of BMoreFit's charity) had been granted a unique opportunity to learn skills in a growing industry, improve their own health, and gain the educational training to influence healthy change amongst their own families and communities, was more than enough for the director, board, and faculty to expect students' to be fully committed to this cause in return for the goodwill they were receiving. In other words, in this form of philanthropy, the desired outcome was not so much the physical transformation of a few young individuals (although Keith's transformation was used as justification for the program's legitimacy), but rather the gradual improvement of community health measures through the targeted educational reformations *of* those few young individuals. Ultimately, this strategy suggests that what is needed is to focus limited resources on the (re)education of a promising few, who can then be tasked with the responsibility to instill a new culture of health responsibilization and literacy amongst the already grossly underserved and impoverished masses. In this sense, the effort to inculcate an entrepreneurial subjectivity in students was underpinned by the broader imperatives of BMoreFit to publically demonstrate the individually transformative powers of fitness, including the possibility of improving community health through the promotion of health and personal responsibility amongst younger citizens.

As a philanthropic pedagogical imperative bordering on exercise eugenics (Winfield, 2007), the perceived ill disciplined nature of students' supposed cultural pathologies (a lack of timeliness, professionalism, emotional presence, and embodied self-discipline) was directly addressed, and subsequently publicized by, BMoreFit. The apparent goal to take "at-risk" youth and produce well behaved, hard working, physically fit, and self sufficient fitness professionals who could reproduce such qualities in others, was a highly celebrated idea for health intervention. For example, during the 2009 summer training program, Keith's

astonishing physical transformation was widely publicized as a testament to the success of BMoreFit's program design (appearing on local news channels with the Director, as well as being published in two local periodicals). Thus, Keith became the poster child for BMoreFit, not only changing his physical appearance dramatically (losing over 50 pounds), but also finishing the program by passing his fitness certifications and gaining employment within a local Y of Central Maryland. In essence, Keith had successfully learned how to "play the game" in terms of giving the director, board members, and faculty what they wanted; a mild mannered, attentive, teachable, personable, outgoing, and ambitious student who would do what was asked, and receive the dictates of the program with enthusiasm. According to one faculty member, Keith had "soaked up everything like a sponge" and had in effect, come to embody the sort of willing figure desired by program faculty, the director, and the board (Danny, Field notes, July, 2011). Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that this was also a tremendous accomplishment for Keith—a testament to the capacities of youth to excel when given the chance, and despite the experience of environmental hazards, institutional barriers, and general lack of viable educational and employment opportunities. However, taken out of context as an example of BMoreFit's benevolent philanthropy, Keith was also made to represent the effectiveness of what was in reality, a very limited, yet still publically praised, voluntary sector intervention.

Subsequently, and having witnessed the decline of the first iteration of BMoreFit, it seemed that the possibilities imagined by its organizers had far exceeded the actual outcomes. As such, it has been my intention to contextualize, interpret, and recount my observations of the program to understand why this iteration of the program failed, and how, within a climate of urban neoliberalization, the idea of intensive educational instruction for underprivileged youth had gained such great appeal, worthy of private sector funding and

support. For students, they were very briefly (during the 2009 and 2010 summer programs), the targets of health intervention, the recipients of fitness philanthropy, and the hopeful examples of how non-profits could potentially address broader social problems like health and juvenile delinquency. Within this context, I sought after ways to permit students' voices to be heard, both in terms of their participation with BMoreFit, and with regard to the issues they face outside the boundaries of the BAC. However, my efforts were severely limited by the programmatic rigors of a program that sought to "keep students on task" in terms of following a strict schedule of fitness and health training.

Thus, with few opportunities to engage with students outside the context of program instruction, I organized several meetings with students to discuss the Photovoice proposal with them. Out of the six students that participated in the first meeting, only three attended the second, and two attended the third. Thus, only David and Mike received a camera, took photos, and returned them. However, after returning them to the BAC without notifying me, they sat in the Director's office for several weeks. During this time, it had also become impossible to contact both David and Mike once David's cell phone service was interrupted, and Mike, as I was told by an unidentified voice on the other end of the phone, had "moved back to his grandmother's in New York" and would "not be continuing with BMoreFit." I could not get a forwarding contact number for Mike, and David's cell phone was the only number I had for him. All my communications with them had ceased by the summer of 2012.

I am left with some images. Photos taken by them both. The only context for them however, was David's exclamation in the third Photovoice meeting, "let me show you what I mean" after discussing how he was frustrated with the fact that the entire area of meager green space to the rear of his mother's row home had been leveled for construction

purposes. Not only that, but that construction efforts had been halted, and the area had been left in poor condition, with large piles of rock and dirt. Subsequently, it had also become a barren and deserted construction zone, which provided a short cut for loiterers and passers by, often leaving behind trash, but also a place for drug and alcohol use, and other potentially illegal or surreptitious activities. Not unlike Asia's frustration with the fact that her mother had called the city and complained about street lights requiring maintenance on their block, on several occasions, to no avail, David expressed a similar frustration with, and distrust of, politicians and city officials that, "*seem to not really care about us or how we live. They make decisions but we don't see…nothing change.*" The sheer number of photos taken by David in this space (over half of his total), reveal his deep concern for how it is affecting his community and its residents.

Within a starkly divided city like Baltimore, distinct visual landscapes of blight and affluence reflect the lived experiences and health outcomes of communities that are so proximally juxtaposed that, for example, only a few short miles separate neighborhoods that have a 20 year gap in rates of life expectancy (Linsky, 2008). This health indicator also correlates with race, household income, education, alcohol and drug use, and a vast number of health disparities that reflect the manner in which, inequitable environmental conditions produce inequitable health outcomes for populations divided by racial and class privilege and disadvantage (Marmot, 2004). Impoverished and working class communities then, like those from whence BMoreFit students came, share a high correlation with negative health outcomes which cannot simply be resolved through targeted micro educational initiatives.

The failures of BMoreFit were thus symptomatic of a much larger 'condition' and 'moment' of American neoliberalism and the everyday operation of white privilege and power, which, as I have attempted to explicate, convinces proponents to view the

unfortunate positions of poverty, underprivilege, and poor health as nothing more than outcomes of individual choice, behavior, or the racialized myths of natural biology (Feagin, 2013; Giroux, 2005, 2009; Wacquant, 2009). Thus, it is subsequently thought that, through philanthropic reformation efforts and educational initiatives, such outcomes can be alleviated, at least for those that put in the required effort, and become assimilated into mainstream hegemonic (read: white and middle class) practices, ideologies, and ways of life (Gramsci, 1971; Winfield, 2007). In this way, both fitness and citizenship became intertwined, and their dominant pedagogies mobilized, within a context of philanthropy that, targeting underprivileged and vulnerable groups of young people, sought to demonstrate "the transformative powers of fitness," (Director, Field Notes, 2010), and the potential that such educational initiatives can have, on reforming the perceived pathologies of "urban" youth.

CHAPTER FOUR: BETWEEN FITNESS PHILANTHROPY AND PHYSICAL CULTURAL FISSURES: THE CONTEXTUAL AND POSITIONAL CONTINGENCIES OF BORDER CROSSING

In the 'field' and on the streets of West Baltimore: Scenes of no relief

It's another hot day in late June. Schools are out and the streets of West Baltimore are rife with activity. Kids are everywhere it seems; a group of young boys and girls run around, some dribble a basketball, others toss a football, while several young girls jump rope and talk amongst themselves. Older men and women gather on and around the historically iconic front stoops of Baltimore City row houses, sharing stories, drinking beer, smoking cigarettes, and observing the scenery. With each block that passes, new and strange aromas fill the thick humid air. With the window down, I try to tune into my senses to see, smell, and hear the daily rhythms and patterns of social life going on around me. I feel a little like the character Jake in the film Training Day; it's my first day on the job, as it were (distributing a paper-based survey on behalf of the BMoreFit organization that is), and I am venturing into unfamiliar, and potentially dangerous, areas of the urban core; the kind of areas most non-residents go out of their way to avoid driving through. As we continue further into the poorest sections of the predominantly black working class area of Hollins Market—an area marked by severe urban blight, crime, disease, and the lowest life expectancy rates in the city (Linsky, 2008)—I remain safe and secure tucked into the soft leather upholstery of the 2008 Volvo SUV being driven by one of my closest childhood friends. As we turn onto Lombard Street however, I lose the signal on my cell phone's GPS. The James McHenry Recreation Center has to be right around here somewhere. Rather than drive around wasting gas, I ask Al to pull over for a minute so I can restart the application and mark out the remainder of our visits for the afternoon. After turning another corner, we pull over behind a white Chevy Caprice, clearly equipped with the popular "police package", although it is missing two hubcaps, and what appears to be a bullet hole just above the bumper. As we park, I notice a group of teenage boys standing near the corner of Boyd and Parkin Street surrounding two other young men sitting on off-road dirt bikes.

Anyone familiar with Baltimore is likely to know about the 12 O'clock boys (see www.12oclockboys.com) and have probably seen, and most certainly heard, packs of young men testing the limits of gravity, and law enforcement, as they brazenly perform tricks throughout the city's built environment (for example, attempting to pop wheelies on 2 wheel and four wheel off-road motor bikes that are so vertically upright that the bike appears to be in the 12 O'clock position; hence the name, 12 O'clock boys). It is a physical cultural practice forged from the uncertain material conditions of contemporary urban blight, increasing securitization of city space, and shrinking opportunities for young men of color to pursue both leisure and labor within the post-industrial metropolis (Giroux, 2012). The emergence of such countercultural and anti-establishment practices should also raise questions about who owns the right to the city? Forgotten, neglected, and cordoned off into pockets of deprivation in this post-industrializing metropolis, these young men are considered outlaws, waging a symbolic war against governing forces by temporarily taking back and staking a claim to city space, albeit by dangerously racing through city streets, risking injury, imprisonment, or even death to experience the thrill of speed, the respect and street credibility it garners, and the sense of power and self-determination it enables. Almost every time I am in Baltimore, I swear I see at least a few of "the boys on the bikes" as I slow down in my car, or stop if I'm out on the sidewalk, so I can watch, and listen, and imagine…what it would be like…

When I was 9, we had a 4-wheeler. Then, my new stepdad bought another one. I became damn good at riding them, both in the woods behind our subdivision, and in the streets of our neighborhood. But I never rode them in the main city streets like the kids I have seen in Baltimore, D.C. and areas of southern PG County Maryland. At 15, I had my first real crash, flipping over the handlebars and gasping for air after landing flat on my back. It still didn't stop me from riding. At 18, I watched my niece crash into a barbed wire fence as I followed close behind. Quickly, I used my shirt to apply pressure to her wounds while my nephew ran to call 911. A year later, both 4-wheelers had been stolen from my parents' garage. We never figured out who stole them, but when I was 18, I got into a fight with, and robbed, someone that I

should not have. I have always wondered, even after squaring things up with him back then, if someone in his entourage had not come back a time later to look around at my parents' house. One night, after looking me up following the incident, they had decided to brandish semi-automatic pistols in the driveway after ringing the doorbell at 3am. "They knew where I lived?!" My Mom was thoroughly freaked out by someone ringing the doorbell like that, but fortunately got to the door late enough to miss the brazen display. I told her it was just someone playing "doorbell ditch." I miss those 4-wheelers. I miss riding fast. For that simple fact, I admire these kids out here. What would it have been like to ride through the city streets, popping wheelies, escaping from the police, all while gaining a rep in your city? But this is the side of me that remembers the thrill of riding fast, of running from the police (on foot though), of being in competition with other young men, whether verbally or physically, and engaging in acts of bravado, senseless violence, and illegal drug and alcohol use. However, I also must view this act of riding within its specific context. These kids ride under a much different set of circumstances, positionalities, and contexts, than I did over 13 years ago, which is likely why I am so fascinated by it. It makes sense to me that, for kids who have very little, and are dealing with the environmental conditions of impoverished Baltimore neighborhoods, the chance to feel the freedom and power of controlling a motor bike wherever and however you see fit, to gain status and reputation, and to make a claim to city space looks extremely enticing, despite the potential dangers.

As I look in the general direction of this group of young men, clouds of smoke billow up into the air around them; the summer heat and lack of breeze make the smoke appear thick and rich as it rises from the cipher. Without turning my head too far in their direction, I remain aware of their movements and interactions as I punch buttons on my phone. I can feel people watching us, perhaps wondering who we are, and what we are doing here, on this street…their street. A tinge of anxiety and uncertainty creeps over me; the kind of feeling you get when you find yourself in unfamiliar territory, geographically disoriented, and most certainly sticking out like a sore thumb to any and all onlookers. People are everywhere. Not just the kids playing or the young men talking and carrying on amidst their careful observation of us. A man wearing

basketball shorts and sneakers, with no shirt, walks past holding a leash in his hand; an intimidating looking Rottweiler is attached to the other end. His arms and upper torso are covered in tattoos although I make sure not to look too hard in trying make them out; I'm curious but I know better. A middle aged woman carrying a brown paper grocery bag and pushing a stroller without a baby, but rather, another brown paper bag in it, rushes down Boyd St. and disappears through an alley west of our location.

As I fiddle with the GPS application on my severely outdated and beat up Galaxy cell phone, I maintain the calm, confident, and "hard" demeanor I absorbed from hanging out with the older kids in my neighborhood growing up (i.e., never show fear, never admit pain and hurt, and always manage your facial expressions to disguise internal emotions and remain in control, confident, and unfazed by whatever situation presents itself). It is a performance of masculinity and urban authenticity that suggests familiarity with, and knowledge about, the spaces and practices of everyday urban life. Thus, despite being quite unfamiliar with this particular section of West Baltimore, I am also no stranger to such environments, particularly in Washington D.C. and surrounding areas of P.G. county Maryland. Nevertheless, the street education of my youth has been somewhat eclipsed by my more recent college education, and I am sitting in a drastically different position as a 31 year old white male attempting to disseminate paper-based surveys to Recreation Centers across Baltimore City. "Why the hell am I even doing this," I think to myself in a moment of frustration. Thank God Al is with me right now. Not only would I hate to be out here by myself doing all this, but I would probably look even more like an undercover Fed to local residents and arouse more suspicion than was already the case.

Having thought through this process beforehand in terms of what areas the centers reside in, I sent the three young, white, undergraduate research assistants (all raised in very rural/suburban, and decidedly white, middle class environments) I had recruited from the University to handle communications with, and visits to, recreation centers in the northern and eastern areas of the city, while Al and I handled the downtown areas including the most notorious sections of West Baltimore. Of course, I was more than happy to have as

one of my undergraduate research assistants, one of my childhood best friends who, after his nearly 8 years of overseas military service, had come home and began taking classes in my department at the University. Born and raised in one of the most dangerous ghettos of central Kingston, Jamaica, Al possessed enough street savvy, physical toughness, and urban credibility for the both of us. Now pursuing a degree in public health and family science, I could not have chosen a more perfect companion for these ventures. In addition to our ability to effectively dialogue about the research process and interpretive analyses, we also share many years of friendship and experience negotiating precarious circumstances and environments in and around the Washington, D.C. area as we grew up. Thus, amidst our present focus on collecting data, there remains the unspoken, yet tacit, understanding of how we will handle any conflict that may arise; he watches my back and I watch his. No matter what happens, we're going through it together.

The sounds of police sirens pierce the air as I finally map out the route to our final two destinations at the James McHenry and Bentalou Recreation Centers. In an instant, we hear the young men on motorbikes rev their engines, the high-pitched wale of 125cc engines echoing as they pop wheelies down Parkin Street. We decide its time for us to pull off as well…to be continued.

From participant observer to "research partner": Narrating the research process

In as much as previous chapters have focused on the context and experience of those involved in BMoreFit, and the role of philanthropy in Baltimore's health and fitness initiatives more generally, this chapter wrestles with the messy realities of conducting ethnographic research in both racially-mixed settings, and the starkly divided socio-spatial environments of Baltimore City (Twine, 2000; Ware, 2002a, 2002b). As I engaged in various methods of observing, enquiring, and examining (Wolcott, 2008), I found that my research experiences ran closely parallel to my own personal lived experience in many ways, exhuming feelings, anxieties, and memories that provoked a desire to explore the

connections of my personal biography with the dialogic performances, and co-constructed knowledge, of the research act itself (Giardina & Newman, 2012; Pelias, 2011; Poulos, 2009). Well accustomed to "code switching" and performing multiple Selves (Denzin, 2014; Newman, 2011) within the often isolated and divergent cultural/racial/classed spaces I negotiated and "passed" within, as I grew up in the DMV (Washington D.C., Maryland, Virginia) in the eighties and nineties (Alexander, 2004), my own perceived conflation of these worlds within BMoreFit, and my new role as an academic, was at times, challenging to negotiate, but also evocatively meaningful and productive.

My purpose here then is to articulate, through the use of emotive stories and "epiphany" moments (Denzin, 2014), the ways in which my data collection efforts were challenged, derailed, and reformulated in the midst of recognizing the unguaranteed, and contingent, politics of both my "street" habitus and credibility, and my somewhat incongruent and newly acquired, academic position (Frow & Morris, 2000; Twine, 2000). To do this, I draw upon my observations and engagements with BMoreFit participants within the BAC, as well as community members and BCRP employees across Baltimore, through the various survey research activities I carried out on behalf of BMoreFit. Hence, through reflexive writing practices, I offer in this chapter, grounded examples of the performative dimensions of the research process. Stemming from personal biographical reflections that contextualize my purpose and role throughout the course of this project (see Prologue), this chapter also builds upon those narratives to provide a deconstructive interpretive auto/ethnography of my experiences working with BMoreFit, from a participant observer to an official research partner and BMoreFit consultant. As I conducted research "in the yard" (Twine, 2000), my proximity to the everyday routines and problematic performances of white philanthropic benevolence and underprivileged black opportunism was at times, a

conflicting experience for me. Long having pledged my allegiances to the oppressed and underprivileged, and without apology, marked myself as a white "race traitor" (Twine, 2000), my "official" role within BMoreFit (along with also being "white" like all but one other authority figure in the organization) was nonetheless positioning me as an ally of what I myself was fervidly critical of: the sovereign white patriarchy and neoliberal healthism of BMoreFit's privileged collaborators, who believe they know best how to "fix" problems of poor health, physical inactivity, crime, delinquency, and violence within "urban" communities.

The further I was pulled into BMoreFit as an official representative, the more deep and rich my observational data collection became, but also the more complicit it appeared I myself was becoming, as my failed efforts with BMoreFit students (the Photovoice project in particular) seemed to reveal that they viewed the activity as just another task BMoreFit wanted them to do. I had become (seen as) too much a part of BMoreFit, and it just might have caused me the lost opportunity to conduct an impactful Photovoice study with Erika, Mike, Iesha, David, Tyler, and Asia. This chapter was actually intended to be that very project. Nevertheless, I do not view such contingencies, and the methodological changes I was forced to make, as failures, but rather, following Hall's (1996) critical reformulation of Marx in that determinate relations exist but cannot be guaranteed in advance (see also, Frow & Morris, 2000), I interpret this outcome as an embodied empirical example of how my own unintentional white privilege produced particular outcomes that I had been unable to foresee, yet reflect the structural realities of both the spaces, and the positionalities of those involved (Giardina & Newman, 2012; Newman, 2011). Instead, and when the Photovoice project seemed to be losing traction, I took the opportunity to assist BMoreFit in a much different, and ill-conceived, form of community-based research. As I tell my graduate

students in the qualitative methods courses I now teach, "you never really know, ahead of time, where ethnographic research will take you."

During the course of my involvement with BMoreFit (December 2009-November 2012), the director asked, in February 2011, if I could conduct some survey research to help determine where the organization should focus their future philanthropic efforts. Having decided that the summer training program for underprivileged youth was too difficult to manage, and had produced only meager successes in 2009 and 2010, BMoreFit organizers sought new pathways through which to "enact healthy change across Baltimore" (Director, field notes, September 2011). However, while the director was quite adamant about seeking out, and forging new partnerships with, other non-profits with an emphasis on health, fitness, and youth, I gained the sense that his Board of Directors' were less wont to pursue the hands-on style of intervention previously employed. Instead, several board members optimistically conveyed to me the potential of their "Teacher ToolKit," which is essentially a handbook on physical activity and fitness, specifically tailored for the use of schoolteachers. The rationale for the toolkit resides in the fact that physical activity opportunities have diminished exorbitantly within public schools, and children are not receiving the same level of instruction about health and fitness, and are not being provided enough time and resources to be physically active during the course of the school day (see Epilogue for further detail). Thus, the toolkit can provide teachers with a guide to facilitate group exercise breaks in the classroom, improve the activity levels of students, and "according to the research will improve students' focus on learning" (Jane, Board Member, Field notes, November, 2011).

In response to the director's request, I noted that my research experience is predominantly qualitative in nature and that I had not worked with survey data in quite some

time. Nevertheless, I wanted to help the organization that had provided me access and allowed me to come and go, in terms of being in the BAC space and observing the program freely and without much question or oversight. With some trepidation, I agreed to do all I could. During the last 8-9 months of 2011, I spent much of my time recruiting undergraduate research assistants, organizing meetings, developing the survey instrument, and devising plans to disseminate the survey and analyze findings. In the course of these efforts, I thought it important to gain a diverse perspective on people's everyday lives and their experiences with health and fitness related issues, from the most affluent to the poorest communities across the city. To do so required that, not only would we collect data from an online survey instrument, but that in order to reach community members without internet access, we would also need to disseminate paper-based surveys as well. As the opening vignette suggests then, the process of distributing and collecting the paper-based surveys was both a significant challenge, but also an illuminating ethnographic experience, as the endeavor took my good friend Al and I on some eventful journeys throughout the divergent socio-spatial landscapes of a starkly divided Baltimore City (two further vignettes, reflecting on these surveying activities, likewise appear in *italics* below; their purpose to complement reflections of embodied research, reflexivity, and shared engagement, within this chapter).

Ultimately then, it was by experiencing the fractured and divisive spaces of Baltimore—likewise reflected in the division of bodies involved in BMoreFit as the givers and receivers of the organization's philanthropic mission—that I kept coming back to the idea of crossing (traversing, rupturing, negotiating) these material, social, and symbolic borders, and how my own embodiment, privilege, and experience were implicated within this process of engaging with people on opposing sides of this divisions (Giardina & Newman, 2012). In recognizing patterns to my own embodied performances within such

divergent socio-spatial contexts, this chapter is organized to reflect the contingencies of crossing socially constructed borders (here specifically those of race, ethnicity, and class) within which, critical issues of credibility and authenticity become not only pivotal, but contextually dependent, subjective, and unguaranteed (Frow & Morris, 2000; Hall, 1996). In other words, as much as I have routinely, and comfortably, traversed boundaries of separation in my own life, the experience of traversing some of those same (race and class) boundaries as a "researcher" was made problematic by my new designation, and its inevitable synergies with my normative positionality (a heterosexual white male), which for the unfamiliar, served to identify me as just another white, privileged, BMoreFit do-gooder.

Thus, I have written this chapter with the hope of opening a dialogic space whereby readers might also imagine, and articulate, the contingencies and contextual conditions of their own lived experience and lived textuality, to make sense of their everyday performances of embodied difference and collective engagement, as both everyday citizens and academic inquirers alike (Denzin, 2014). In doing so, I have drawn upon some of my life stories (see Prologue), epiphany moments (Denzin, 2014), as well as research experiences, to situate myself, and my embodied performances with others, both within the elite context of the BAC, and in the occasionally foreboding areas of West Baltimore neighborhoods, and several run down, understaffed, and underfunded recreation centers that I visited. Following Denzin (2014), it is my hope that through the telling of these lived textualities, I can contribute a performed pedagogy of radical and dialogic communitarianism which, within the PCS oeuvre, is committed to "progressive social change" (Miller, 2001, p. 1), and the ongoing construction of political histories of the physical cultural present (Grossberg, 2006).

Still border crossing…a brief biographical reflection

Outside of the BAC, and in light of the Board of Director's decision to discontinue working with "at-risk" youth in the summer training program, the conditions for my data collection efforts took a drastic turn in 2011. From the simple and secure, controlled and contained environment of the BAC space, to the open and precarious, uncertain and ominous spaces of a dilapidated Baltimore City, I sought to enquire about how different people view, think about, and experience fitness and health, and why? In particular, and having established a general typology of BMoreFit philanthropists and fitness enthusiasts in relative contradistinction from the "urban" youth whom they sought to educate, discipline, and reform, I wanted to bolster these observations by looking beyond the BAC. How one's positionality (ethnicity, class background, and education in particular) structures the outcomes and experience of health, fitness, and the individual body remains a central preoccupation for me for a particular reason. Through my own familial disjunctures, I have existed on competing sides of these positional boundaries at different times of my life and performed a sense of Self congruent to the liminal spaces of my in-process identity: working class and middle class, fat and fit, urban and suburban, reckless and disciplined, willfully ignorant and educated, religious and agnostic, and exquisitely familiar with, and adept at,

negotiating the performative sensibilities of both the white middle class and black working classes.

I would also be remiss not to admit my personal fascinations with street culture from about the age of eight. It was not simply the kind of fear and fascination that writers like Yousman (2003) discuss as being typical of white suburban kids who listen to rap music and mimic the aesthetics of black culture as an apolitical act of consumption (see also, hooks, 1992;). My chosen circle of friends, were in fact "street kids" (delinquent youth with a penchant for weed, women, and money that was, to varying degrees, influenced by the culture of hip hop and the examples of older kids in our neighborhood) and in turn, I became "the cool white boy" when I was with them. But what was it that attracted me to this world of countercultural defiance, and endeared me to the signs and symbols of Black Power and Black Unity that would make most white adults cringe and curse in disbelief? My first cassette tape I stole from a friend of my cousin Chris when I was about seven, *Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five*. It was the single of their pioneering track, *The Message*, which had released in 1982. But it was Public Enemy's 1989 album, *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold us Back*, and subsequent 1991 release, *Fear of a Black Planet* that became the powerful emotive pedagogies through which I learned to shape my own resistance and sense of Self. I was just a kid sure, and certainly naïve and misguided. However, the broken and uncertain contexts of my childhood experience made this particular form of linguistic cultural expression that much more meaningful to me. It spoke to me in a way that nothing, and nobody, else could. It spoke truths about this unjust social system we inhabit; truths kept hidden from most young white boys like myself; little white boys that grow up to "innocently," ignorantly, or purposefully, reproduce this system of white privilege and black

oppression (Brayton, 2005; Byrne, 2009; Castagno, 2008; Ellis, 2009; Feagin, 2013; Gilroy, 2001; Hall, 1997a; hooks, 1992; Kitwana, 2005a; Lipsitz, 2006; Yousman, 2004).

Undefined and inarticulate at the time, my heartfelt desire to "take sides" (Harding, 2004; Silk & Andrews, 2011) with a racial group historically subjugated by the possessive greed and tyrannical power of my own ancestors was forged, not simply from consuming the messages of Chuck D, KRS-One, Eric B. & Rakim, Gang Starr, NWA, and the Geto Boys (just to name a few), but more importantly, from my routine and synergistic participation in the practices, spaces, and mentalities of street culture with my neighborhood friends. We didn't just listen to hip-hop, we lived it as a lifestyle and way of thinking. It was much more than just the music. But the question then, is why at age eight? Denzin (2014) suggests that, "the biographical project begins with personal history, with the sting of childhood memory, with an event that lingers and remains in the person's life story" (p. 28). My own trauma begins at age eight and I have never fully resolved it. I lost something in 1989 and I have never gotten it/her back. In the wake of upheaval and familial divisiveness, my mother was my best friend and all I had growing up. In 1989 she got married, and chose the dogmatically religious and conservative lifestyle of her new husband. Things would never be the same, and nor would she. I never bonded with my stepfather. I swallowed the pain of my loss and when my mother asked me how I felt about them being together, I couldn't express the feelings of abandonment I had, and for far too long, held onto. All that concerned me was seeing her happy. I didn't want to see her hurt anymore and here was someone that seemed to mitigate her sorrows. I let it go, and instead turned to the streets for approval, acceptance, and friendship.

Thus began the formative stages of my double life: playing the role of the preacher's stepson on Sundays, and taking out my frustrations through the reckless abandon of street

life as a delinquent youth. While my own father dropped out in the 10th grade, my stepfather, (a university economics professor) was able to provide tuition remission for my undergraduate degree: an event that significantly altered the path of my life chances and outcomes. Nevertheless, now that I am college educated, and have joined the ranks of the working professoriate, I continue to pursue activities, and frequent spaces, redolent of urban hip-hop culture (i.e., nightclubs and block parties in Washington, D.C. and Rochester, NY, for example) from which, my performative habitus is both constituted and reproduced. As a university instructor, I confidently dialogue with older tenured, and overwhelmingly white, faculty members in departmental meetings on one hand, while I continue to consort with friends and acquaintances that have never had the chance to attend college, and quite literally, have little option but to hustle in the illicit economies of street life everyday to survive. As much as I have moved on in my own life, gaining educational and career opportunities that my peers did not, I have never forgotten them. I feel a responsibility to remember, and to maintain my connection to the people, places, and practices that influenced my class habitus, and performative embodiment, as an early nineties hip-hop youth (Kitwana, 2005a, 2005b).

Subsequently, through the critical Physical Cultural Studies education I received, I have sought to better articulate these divergent worlds of the proletariat and the professoriate, with the aim of developing a more accessible critical pedagogy of physical culture and the body. This is part of my own personal redemption, and it is the reason I have sought to leave a mark on the institutions and individuals I engage within academia, and in communities where I seek to inquire about, and hopefully assist in, issues of social justice and equality. We all come from somewhere, and as Wise (2011) reminds me; we are all complicated by the personal histories, positionalities, and contexts of our everyday lived

experience. My own performative embodiment, and the familiarity I have within such diverse spaces and social contexts, reflects a duality of my own Self, which in the course of my dissertation fieldwork, produced certain unforeseen conflicts and difficulties, particularly in terms of gaining the trust of privileged white philanthropists and fitness professionals on one hand, and underserved African American youth on the other. My ability to fluidly shift between the common codes and conventions, embodiments, and performative habitus of these disparate groups was ruptured by them being brought into sharp relief, within an empirical context of which I myself, often felt out of place. Thus, through the performative processes of co-constructing knowledge with others, I have also sought to write my own biographical reflections to better interpret the dialogic engagements I experienced with BMoreFit organizers and participants.

On the path to BMoreFit

> The BMoreFit organization is completely unique in that it will fill an unmet, urgent need by matching an underserved community of young, predominantly African American adults with a program made up of dedicated *faculty*, mentors and volunteers, state-of-the-art facilities, professional training materials, individual and group fitness and nutrition coaching, and a variety of externship and job placement opportunities. BMoreFit will motivate and guide this pilot group of *students* to improve their own fitness and to obtain the education and skills necessary to become certified fitness professionals. They will ultimately give back to their communities through their newly obtained professional knowledge and experiences (BMoreFit Website, 2009)

After discovering the BMoreFit website and reading the above quote for the first time, my mind raced with thoughts of how to engage this unique program which, given the focus (fitness and health), purpose (combating ill health and delinquency through educational training), and the bodies involved (privileged adults and underserved youth), seemed to be an ideal empirical site through which I could, following Newman & Giardina

(2011), "study social bodies and physical cultures often situated (by self or other) at the intersecting vectors of power, knowledge, and identity, mingling about those subject positionalities upon which power is either challenged or reaffirmed (in both real and imaginary ways) through bodily performance and praxis" (p. 1). My first visit to the Baltimore Athletic Club (BAC) had been eye opening. The Director had given me an address over the phone but no indication that BMoreFit would be operating out of a very affluent, private health club. Thus, what began as an examination of Baltimore's voluntary sector responses to health and fitness disparities, evolved into a project to uncover the pedagogical apparatus of neoliberalism within the BMoreFit program, and how power and (white) privilege operated within the structures of this form of philanthropic outreach. Influenced by the "radical contextualism" of cultural studies (Grossberg, 1997), in which "context is everything and everything is context…a conceptual theory of contexts as the lived miluex of power" (pp. 7-8), I sought to locate this program within the broader framework of urban governance, and the role of Baltimore's voluntary sector in these healthist-oriented, gentrifying, civilizing, disciplinary, and reformative efforts. With time however, my participation in the program, and the various roles I held within it, became increasingly salient as I became conscious of how my own actions, speech, and presence were implicated in producing the spatial relations and outcomes I was seeking to represent (Giardina & Newman, 2011). My positionality and lived experience, the manner in which they influenced my embodied presence and engagement with different people within the BAC, required deconstruction and critical self-reflection.

In a divided space, and amongst bodies that suggest a diverse array of lived experiences and social positions, I have endeavored to situate my own corporeality along the articulatory axes of politics and practice (Giardina & Newman, 2011). As an "embodied

activity" (Coffey, 1999, p. 59), my dialogic engagements with two distinct and severely polarized groups of people would prove extremely difficult and contradictory at times, but such struggles pushed me to consider how I was positioning my own self in relation to them. Just as I sought to unpack power dynamics and the pedagogical apparatus of neoliberalism within this space, studying bodies within it, how they interact, what they say, how they move, and so forth, I was made increasingly aware of my own role in these dialogic encounters and how I too was being observed, read, and interpreted. Although acknowledging the way in which research is an "interactive process shaped by one's personal history, biography, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity, and those of the people in the setting" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 5), I had not begun to reflexively interrogate the precise ways in which my own biographical peculiarities were being brought to bare upon the dialogically produced, and interactive, embodied research acts I was interpreting and representing (Giardina & Newman, 2011).

As my participation in the site deepened, and I was asked to assume greater roles and responsibilities within the organization however, I saw myself less as an observing researcher, and more as an active embodied participant, which, in turn, moved me to realize that, "methodological reflexivity through embodied ethnography should not be something that is an afterthought; it should be the very basis by which fieldwork is done" (Nabhan-Warren, 2011, p. 384). As such, I am seeking to represent a process of (self) discovery here. More specifically, I am seeking to explicate how my research engagements and experiences opened the door to critical self-reflection concerning the pluralistic Self(s) I have created and performed throughout a very divided life, and in turn, how this impacted the research act. The particularities of my personal and embodied politics, lived experience, and contingently liquid identity (Bauman, 2000), shaped by a number of divergent socio-spatial contexts and

circumstances, became lucid through my participation in divisive empirical contexts which, resembled aspects of my own disjunctured life and tendency to "border cross" frequently. Following Newman's (2011), "attempt to reconcile issues of 'immersion,' 'insider-outsider' dichotomy, 'entrée,' 'passing,' and representations of the body" (p. 545), by problematizing the politics of embodiment and subjectivity inherent to particular research acts, I wish to articulate the performative border crossing of my personal life history (see Prologue for an extended discussion) with the empirical contexts of embodied research acts, wherein I was, for the first time, prevented from crossing successfully. Reworked from my field notes, the following excerpt sets the opening scene to my embodied research encounters, and importantly, to demonstrate this *process* of self-reflexive discovery through the research act, discusses how I initially perceived the program and people within the BAC.

The first encounter: A narrative from field notes (February, 2010)

The day has finally come; the starting point of an engaged process of ethnographic interactions and embodied research acts (Goodall, 2000; Giardina & Newman, 2011) from which, I would never be the same. That moment is now; the beginning of a journey that would be fraught with painful disjuncture, (dis)comfort, and heartache, but also one of liberation, clarity, and fulfillment. As I appease my 2-year-old daughter's playful mood, I mentally prepare for the immediate task at hand. Should I just try to build rapport this time, worry about the specifics of my research intentions later? What should I say about myself? How much of me should I reveal? What parts of myself, (my identity, my experience, my politics, my beliefs) should I foreground and what parts should I silence? There is that feeling again. Like the first day of football tryouts when, after visibly appraising my plump

little 10 year old body, I was instructed by the assistant coach to run laps with a full sweat suit on, in 90 degree heat, so I could drop weight and have a chance at making the squad.

Ever conscious of how I am being perceived ("read") by others, I am concerned with that impending moment when I will enter a new and unfamiliar space, uncertain who will be there, and how they will greet my presence. Add to this the potentially contradictory and power-laden identifications, and purposes, of being a "researcher" or "PhD candidate", to my already privileged subject position (white, male, heterosexual), and I am already questioning my "right" to be doing this at all. With trepidation, I pack up my all-black Jansport backpack; large yellow notepad, extra pens, old school style cassette recorder and blank tape. Running behind, I rush out the door hoping to miss I-95 North traffic on my way to Baltimore to meet with the Executive Director of BMoreFit. Just a brief perusal of the website had signaled for me, an opportunity to not only engage with issues of race/ethnicity and health disparities, post-industrial urban space, and physical cultural injustice and inequity, but to immerse myself in spaces, communities, and cultures that are also familiar, and of which, I am passionate about. What better site to construct a dissertation within the fluid boundaries of Physical Cultural Studies (PCS) than this, I thought?

I-95 traffic was not as bad as I thought it would be. I'm about 15 minutes early so I sit down, anxiously, in a lounge type area just to the right of the front desk. With a cheerful smile, and the kind of jovial comportment I have come to expect from (on-duty) fitness professionals, the woman working behind the front desk asks me whom I am here to see. When I responded with the Director's name and BMoreFit, she became even more excited, almost thankful, in a relieved sort of way, to know that I was here in some capacity on behalf of BMoreFit. "That's so great. We're so glad you are here. Please have a seat and I will let

him know you are waiting," she says to me. Interesting. I decide to look around a little. Without walking past the invisible barrier separating the public waiting area, and the interior spaces of the facility, I cast my gaze across the open floor areas. Cardio equipment, a kid's daycare room, a partial view of the machine weight area, and to the right, a row of about six full-size, enclosed squash courts. It is far nicer than the Gold's gyms I have worked at in Maryland, or even the, rather affluent, Jewish Community Center I worked at in Memphis, TN.

I begin wondering how the program operates within, and coexists alongside, the regular routines and visitors to this exclusive space. Everyone I see here is white, and not only that, but they all seem to be adorned with markers of privilege (expensive workout clothes and shoes, sport watches, iPods and headphones, gym bags and equipment, and nutritional supplements) and carry themselves in a manner that suggests a great distance from necessity, an air of privileged embodiment. And then I see it. The visual manifestation of philanthropic efforts for the poor and underserved; the performative spectacle through which the haves (most often white philanthropists) attempt to rescue, refine, alter, intervene, and indeed, respond to, any number of real or perceived "social problems" impacting the urban poor. Amongst a sea of white adults, three young boys are being closely watched and instructed, their bodily movements and actions appraised and critiqued, until considered satisfactory. They are learning to play squash: part of another non-profit utilizing the BAC facility to impact the lives of "at-risk" and underserved youth in Baltimore. As I observe this scene however, I am slightly disturbed by the fact that I can't just accept what I see as the honest efforts of people possessing the time and money to invest in helping young people learn a skill, a sport, that they would not likely have the chance to do otherwise. How could anything be wrong with this? Is it the contingent, and inevitably racialized, boundaries

operating here, which temporarily permit a disruption of this racially homogenous space in moments when Black youth are being taught and instructed, their behavior refined? Is it the philanthropic nature of these efforts, and my own wariness of the role of charity in, what Zizek (2009) would consider to be, reinforcing the legitimacy of neoliberal capitalism, and justifying, even helping to reproduce, the inequities it produces?

However, if I was that squash instructor right now, and another critical cultural studies pedagogue walked through the door to observe this scene, how would I look any different? I don't know the participants in this program, the nature of their relationship, and I haven't a clue what messages are being presented to the boys, outside of the obvious mechanics of playing squash. Nevertheless, it is the visual appearance that provokes in me a degree of suspicion, exhuming my tendency to negatively appraise the lifestyles, politics, and attitudes of privileged whiteness; to criticize white philanthropists who, seeing or hearing about delinquent youth, crime, and the perceived "pathologies" of urban Blackness, seek to intervene in their own particular ways. Or, perhaps it is the historical colonialist undertones implicit within the charitable enterprise itself? As I reflexively consider from where this pessimism has emerged from—perhaps a critical graduate education through the realms of British Cultural Studies, Sociology (of sport and the body), and the emergence of an embodied PCS oeuvre (Giardina & Newman, 2011; Silk & Andrews, 2011)—I am made more aware of the need to challenge my own assumptions and question the manner in which, I am interpreting the embodied performances and philanthropic intentions of those governing non-profit organizations for underprivileged youth.

Would the BMoreFit program also resemble this scene of white benevolent patriarchy, lacking diversity amongst their instructors who, like this squash program, appear to share little in common with their students in terms of lived experience and positionality?

Is this always a bad thing? Educational research suggests the need for, and efficacy of, developing a diverse teaching force because, for one, "the presence of teachers of color decreases the sense of alienation that students of color—from both poor and affluent backgrounds—often experience in schools" (Villegas, Strom, & Lucas, 2012, p. 285). I agree with such arguments, not only to support increased opportunities for teachers of color, but to provide positive role models for youth who, seeing so few teachers that look like them in white dominated institutions, associate such professions of the mind as being a decidedly white occupation (Villegas, Strom, & Lucas, 2012). Within the field of fitness and health instruction then, I would also argue that there are similar outcomes; some of which may include the association of certain fitness and health pedagogies as reflecting white middle class experience. As such, how then do I reconcile my own position as a white male teacher that actively seeks to work with such youth? My lived experience, and commitment to anti-racism, social justice, and critical education, still does not position me outside the boundaries of white privilege and its contextual (re)production. I need to deconstruct and reflexively interrogate my own inbetween-ness and embodied performance(s); this is only the first layer.

Rupture—to be, or not to BMoreFit? (June 2010)

> For me white privilege has turned out to be an elusive and fugitive subject. The pressure to avoid it is great, for in facing it I must give up the myth of meritocracy. If these things are true, this is not such a free country; one's life is not what one makes it; many doors open for certain people through no virtues of their own" (McIntosh, 1989, p. 12)

While I was ready to have my whiteness questioned within, what I had initially assumed would be, a program of diverse faculty who could identify with the experiences of underprivileged youth in Baltimore, and thereby be best suited to engage them positively as role models and mentors, I had assumed wrong. While I was counting on the atypicality of

my "street" habitus to work in my favor once people got to know me, being very familiar, and comfortable, within black cultural and communal spaces since my youth, this would not be the case. As it turned out, this non-profit would be run almost entirely by white, middle-upper class fitness professionals and privileged philanthropists; their purpose to educate "at-risk" youth about fitness and health to reform their behavior, attitudes, and lifestyles, and ingratiate a "philanthropic mindset" amongst them which, amounted to the expectation that they would take the knowledge they had received back to their own communities (areas that program faculty would avoid driving through, no matter what time of day!). Deeply critical of these realities once they became apparent, I nonetheless exploited my positionality to gain access, playing up aspects of my identity and experience to mark myself as "safe"; a fellow colleague of fitness/health promotion, and an articulate, college educated, white man. And, of course, so typical of the very sort of mentality that white privilege sustains, I justified my performances with the naïve thought that perhaps *I* would have an opportunity to make a difference for *these* young people (Endres & Gould, 2009).

"*This is bullshit! What you think bout it, Ron*?"

The question pierces through the air, temporarily suspending the commotion and mounting chaos of multiple voices in the room. Dissent, conflict, and a palpable tension, has suddenly disrupted the seemingly peaceful calm and congeniality I had thus far witnessed between program faculty and students. Jolted from my own invisible silence, my mind races, *oh shit, what do I think?* This internal questioning quickly shifts to the more pressing concern with, *what should I say in this immediate situation? Should I reveal how I really think? Or, should I remain neutral?* There it is again, that convenient privilege of being able to remain *neutral* without explanation, protected by the normativity of my whiteness, my educational capital, my credibility as a fitness-professional. Asia, a larger young black woman waits for my

response to her inquiry, as do the five other young people sitting around the table. They had each been charged with the task of writing a letter to their local congressional representative, in order to highlight the kind of philanthropic work being done by BMoreFit, how it is impacting the lives of young people, and to invite the representative to a publicity event BMoreFit would be holding a month later. While I was internally questioning what seemed to me, an opportunistic use of students' time, and representational status as "at-risk" and underprivileged, students' were reluctant to complete this task on account of their stated disbelief in the effectiveness of political leaders who, as Mike stated, "don't really care about black folks anyway." As a group, they share positional and experiential commonalities that BMoreFit organizers are absurdly far removed from: the socially constructed, yet materially felt, experience of being "black" in a racist society; part of the "urban" underclass, underserved, and far too often, overlooked and neglected, by a neoliberalizing political economic order intent on normalizing 'survival of the fittest' individualism; young, and often perceived as, and labeled, "at-risk" by agencies seeking to reform and influence their behavior, lifestyle, and right to self-definition. While Asia, Mike, David, Iesha, Tyler, and Erika each possessed unique interests, attributes, and aspirations, cultivated from their various life experiences, within the context of BMoreFit, such individualities were submerged within the pedagogical imperatives of fitness and health lifestyle reformation.

The faculty instructor for the day, a progressive white liberal, also looks in my direction, his face communicating a sense of shock and uncertainty; at a loss for what to do or say to these kids; desperately hoping that I, another white man with a college education and fitness experience, can perhaps chime in to lend support, and restore the "natural order" of pedagogical instruction, teacher and student, business as usual. But the conditions of my own upbringing, the contexts and experiences from which my embodied habitus has

developed, separates me from BMoreFit organizers, their purposes and worldviews, despite the obvious similarities of our skin color, and various levels of relative occupational, and educational, privilege. When lines are drawn, I have always sided, or at least attempted to side, with the marginalized and oppressed. It has always felt right to me. Nevertheless, already positioned within the BMoreFit organization as an ally, and fellow fitness enthusiast, I am also caught between both my concern and empathies for students, and my need to maintain good standing with BMoreFit organizers to permit my continued involvement. I don't like to, but I choose my words carefully:

"*I think it's important to try and be an active participant in asserting your rights of citizenship…but, its not always an easy thing if you feel left out and invisible.*"

My comment is met with mixed responses. Iesha, David, and Erika nod their head in agreement, while Asia and Mike, perhaps interpreting my remark as a nice way of agreeing with the current instructor, balk at the response and continue refusing to participate in the health-oriented letter writing activity to their local congressman. As the attention then shifts towards the Director who has just entered the room, seemingly primed for "damage control" in order to get students back on task, I lean back in my chair and immediately question my decision of relative neutrality. I could have ardently expressed my understanding of the neglect shown towards impoverished and underserved black communities across America, and that I acknowledge the reality of these woefully disparate systems of governance and control. If I had been in the room alone with students, I would have had no qualms about revealing my own criticisms concerning political power, white privilege, and race and class inequities. Why had I not spoken my mind in that moment? When I finally did have the chance some months later, I believe that it was too late. For fear of disrupting, and losing my access to, what I had come to recognize as, a highly disciplined

space of fitness pedagogy, I had in some ways, and by default, allowed my privilege to speak for me. Knowing that the Director had previously expressed his imperative that students know that within BMoreFit, "it's not about race, it's about fighting childhood obesity in Baltimore" (Field notes, Director, July 2010), I was particularly hesitant about being the person who incited students to protest on account of racial inequities, and the manner in which they were being utilized to garner public support for BMoreFit. It would have been a terribly easy thing for me to do though. It would have felt good. Perhaps the Director would have exiled me from the program, or perhaps not? Perhaps, students might have been more willing to engage with me differently than BMoreFit representatives, or perhaps not? In reality, it felt like I had put my own interests (getting meaningful "data" for this project, earning my doctorate, and getting a job) ahead of advocating on behalf of students', and their vulnerable positions within the program.

I wanted so badly to have some moments alone with the students; away from the faculty instructors who are so dogmatically focused on their purpose, and the "righteousness" of their cause, that they never consider, or attempt to connect pedagogical instruction with, the experiences, desires, hopes, fears, and everyday lived realities of their fitness pupils (marked by the experience of living in environments of instability, transience, and danger). It is a theme I discuss at length, elsewhere in this dissertation. It is also the reason I determined to conduct a Photovoice project with the students; a chance for me to connect with them outside the structured boundaries of the program, and provide an opportunity for them to make their voices heard, their lived experiences of injustice and inequality known, particularly in relation to the issues of fitness and health that form the core of this shared engagement.

However, and not unlike the well-intentioned, yet misguided, efforts of my pale-skinned counterparts to educate and help underprivileged black youth to succeed, I too made assumptions that reflect the naïve perceptions of my own racial and educational privilege. Principally, I had assumed that BMoreFit youth would be anxious to share their experiences of fitness and health disparity, or other forms of injustice, because the program had not provided an outlet for them to speak on such issues, even while it was expected that they would take the knowledge they had gained to intervene in these very same issues within their own communities. Thus, the manner in which I noticed students being silenced from discussing inequality, race and racism, for example (see chapter 3), was terribly problematic for me to witness, and in turn motivated me to seek out ways to engage students more productively in this regard (Castagno, 2008; Cooper, 2009; Pollock, 2004; Rodriguez, 2011).

Throughout the course of these activities however, I became increasingly aware of the ways in which my identity, and experience, were producing particular outcomes within the shared spaces of embodied interaction (Giardina & Newman, 2011). In particular, my association with the BMoreFit Director, and faculty, functioned to unintentionally mark me as a collaborator in BMoreFit's overarching purpose and method in reforming the health and lifestyles of underprivileged youth. Through self-reflection and "writing as method" (Richardson, 2000), I delved deeper into my own self, interrogating the ways in which, my usually atypical, anti-white whiteness, was nonetheless rendered impotent while performing my "researcher self" and "personal trainer self" within the BAC space, and amongst BMoreFit organizers. While often uncomfortable, these ethnographic engagements were priceless in terms of forcing me to reevaluate, and critically examine, my own Self, and subsequently, interpret why I had difficulty negotiating my relationships with both BMoreFit faculty and students simultaneously. Subsequently, the research act has, in dialectic fashion,

altered and refined my critical interpretive epistemology; placing my lifelong tendency to border cross (existing in disparate racial, class, and religious contexts of community and family life) at the center of my axiological commitment to disrupt power imbalances, and challenge the systemic maintenance of white privilege within BMoreFit, the BAC, society at large, and in my own life (Feagin, 2013; Lipsitz, 2006; Wise, 2011). This pursuit, and the implications it is likely to have for my life and my work, require some further unpacking however.

To be Black, to be White, or, to suggest a fixity of (racial) identity?

As white men, John Howard Griffin, in *Black Like Me* (1960), and Ray Sprigle, writing *In The Land of Jim Crow* (1949) each attempted to darken their skin to feign an artificial embodiment of the Black American experience. While each pose significant ethical issues reflective of the contextually situated power relations of their historical conjuncture, it is useful to briefly consider their implication with regard to epistemological issues ranging from perception, lived experience, and the concept of "racial matching" within social research (Twine, 2000). As Ware (2002b) notes, Griffin was initially motivated to "perform" research in blackface after disseminating a flawed survey instrument in which he asked members of black and white communities their opinions concerning the high number of young black male suicides in the south. One respondent noted: "you probably can't help it, but you think *white*…we don't believe it's possible for a white man, even one trained in the sciences, to interpret his findings without thinking white and thereby falsifying the truth" (p. 62). Subsequently, Griffin decided that he could never truly understand racism from "the outside" as a white man, and that, he needed to "wake up some morning in a black man's skin" in order to gain an insider's perspective (p. 62).

The concept of "racial matching" in social research assumes that pairing a researcher with participants of the same racial/ethnic background will more often than not, produce more accurate accounts and shared understanding. As Phoenix (1994) suggests however, this assumption is often rooted in a realist epistemology in which there is an assumed unity of truth and identity shared by interviewers and respondents of the same racial or ethnic background. Thus, while "racial matching" had a role to play, as Twine (2000) suggests, to democratize the racially homogenous social scientific community and mitigate "distrust of the research enterprise" and its anglo-centrism (Zinn, 1979, quoted in Twine, 2000, pp. 7-8), it has since been challenged by anti-racist scholars for furthering racial essentialisms. William Julius Wilson (1974) for example, suggested that,

> There is no factual evidence to suggest that a sociologist has to be black to adequately describe and explain the experience of blacks…Moreover, although the contrary is sometimes assumed, the black experience is not uniform. Despite the fact that all blacks may have been victimized by racist behavior, at one time or another, the black experience may nevertheless vary by social class, region of the country and age. Indeed some middle-class black sociologists may have experiences closer to that of middle-class white sociologists than to those of lower class blacks (p. 326)

In short, the particularities of gaining "insider" status, or determining the utility of an "outsider" perspective, should always consider racial and ethnic dimensions of experience, but not to the exclusion of others (nationality, region, gender, age, sexuality, ability, class, etc.). In some instances, as Twine (2000) and Ware (2002a) suggest, more productive and qualitatively rich exchanges of "situated" knowledge and understanding can occur between racially distinct parties due to the nature of the subject matter discussed, regional/national context, and the lived experience and cultural background of participants and researchers (See also, Phoenix, 1994). What this suggests then, is the contingent and contextual nature of racial identification and experience. Or, as Essed (1994) suggests, people have "multiple identifications" that are not always, and already, overdetermined by categorizations that

would suggest an essential position of racialized experience, belief, and being. In making this argument, I am aware of the possible implications; for example, that I am only making the point so that my identification as a white male would not discredit the knowledge claims I make about the black youth in my study. More to the point however, I am suggesting the fluid "liquidity" of identity (Bauman, 2000) as a construct to understand how my positionality impacted, and helped to co-construct, the spaces of interaction and understanding that I experienced; for example, why I often experienced the feeling of being out of place and far less comfortable around program faculty and the Board of Directors, than I did around the youth in the program (despite sharing similar racial, educational, and professional experiences with faculty). Or, why it was easier to converse with students and find common ground with them (sharing common interests, cultural capital, and knowledge about hip hop culture, for example), but also found at times, that my presence and purpose was being read as inauthentic due to the perceptions a few students had of me being close to program faculty and identifying more with them—an unfortunate result of my performing the roles through which I had gained access and the trust of organizational gatekeepers.

Performative contingencies: Failing to "pass" (July 2010)

The air conditioning is set to full blast as I pull up to the BAC parking lot. Another wicked hot summer day in Baltimore. Not a cloud lingers in the sky as the sun beams down, unabated onto the blacktop. Into the parking spot next to me, a white Lexus gingerly makes its entrance, parking far enough away from me so that, even if I were to accidentally fling open my door, it would not reach the immaculately clean auto. To do so required the driver to purposefully take up part of two spaces to the left of me. "I hate when people do that," I think to myself in a

flash moment of judgment, associating this spectacle of wealth and privilege to the self-absorbed and pretentious, autonomous subject. The man exits his 60-80k GS model Lexus, Ray-Bans on, Nike Dri-Fit tank top, Nike athletic shorts, and of course, Nike cross trainer sneakers to match. As he flings the shoulder strap of his gym bag over his head, and begins walking towards the BAC entrance, I hear the beeping sound made by his setting of the vehicle alarm.

It is entirely too hot as I walk across the blacktop to the front door. Once through the second doorway opening into the BAC however, I am met with the refreshing coolness of conditioned air, and the unexpectedly fresh aroma, of a meticulously well-maintained health club. BMoreFit students are already present, seated in the lounge area to the right of the front desk. David, making eye contact with me, motions a silent "hello" from across the room by quickly, in one motion, raising up slightly, and immediately lowering, his head and chin to their original position. I immediately return the same gesture and continue walking past the front desk towards the lounge area. On their way to the locker room, Asia and Erika pass by me. I say hello but only Erika responds. I haven't seen the director yet and I am not sure who the faculty instructor is for the day. Mike, Iesha, Tyler, and David, all seated in the lounge area, say hello with as much energy as they can muster on a Monday morning. "What up Ron?" David inquires…

"Not too much man, feelin tired today though. How you doin?"

"ahhhhhhh, you prolly had a good weekend then, huh?" [laughing]

"Yea man, it was pretty fun actually…"

"whatchu get into?"

"just hanging wit some of my peoples I ain't seen in forever. How bout you. How was your weekend?"

"okay, okay. Yea, it was aight I guess."

In the corner of the lounge area, Mike and Iesha are giggling incredulously about something on Iesha's cell phone. Mike leans closer to further inspect the details when Iesha pulls away with a half smile:

"I swear he did," says Iesha

"Ight, whateva yung," Mike retorts

Following closely behind Erika and Asia, who are returning from the locker room, the Director appears unusually fatigued, or perhaps preoccupied, with a look of concern on his face. Motioning towards me, he asks, "Ron, can you give me a minute?" "Of course," I respond. We walk through the squash court area towards the locker rooms, and turn left down the corridor near his office.

"Would you mind taking the lead on some of the training sessions? I'm having some difficulty coordinating schedules with some of the faculty"

"I mean, yeah, sure, I can do that"

"Great, okay, let me see if Sharice is going to make it today and we can go from there"

"Alright"

Walking back towards the lounge area, I am not so sure I made the right decision in agreeing to take an even more active role in BMoreFit. Part of me feels hesitant that I am positioning myself too closely to BMoreFit organizers. Back in the lounge area, the Director calls for everyone's attention, and further reiterates to students that, with my experience and knowledge in fitness and health, I can be a great asset to student's learning and success in the program. The students look at me. There is an awkward moment of silence. A terribly uncomfortable feeling creeps over me about being held up in front of them like this, as if they needed to be reminded of who I was. Publically thanking me for my help with

BMoreFit, the Director goes on to discuss the week's schedule and how excited he is to be gearing up for another week of BMoreFit training. I sit down near David and Tyler, and try to blend back into the group, but it feels like the Sheriff has just deputized me. How can I expect to participate in activities *with* students, consort *with* them and better understand *their* experiences, if I am being asked to occupy an instructive, even disciplinary role, in terms of their pedagogical fitness training? The manner in which I had been attempting to befriend students was by showing them the real side of me, reflective of my classed and multicultural experiences. I did not talk about my college degrees, personal trainer certifications, employment experiences, and so forth. I did not use a professional voice and tone in speaking with students. I did not attempt to intervene as an authority figure in moments when students were losing focus or getting "off-task," as the Director liked to put it. I simply tried to get to know them with the hope of gaining their trust. Perhaps this is just not the place, time, and context for me to successfully "pass" as anything other than an educated white male fitness professional, like all the rest they see here?

Performative contingencies: "Passing" too well? (April, 2010)

As alluded to in chapter three (see *A brief pause for self-reflexive disclaimers* on pg. 165), I found it fascinating, and disturbing, that the positional combinations of my race, education, and fitness experience, within the context of BMoreFit, predisposed me to being viewed as a willing participant and like-minded peer. Frustrated by the difficulty of developing enough rapport with students to permit deeper levels of dialogic engagement, such trust was quickly and effortlessly gained amongst BMoreFit organizers who inevitably saw in me, a fellow fitness enthusiast, well educated, and versed in performing the embodied proprieties of white middle class professional. As such, I became privy to conversations that I seriously doubt

would have occurred, or would have been worded quite differently, if I did not seem to fit the previously described positional characteristics. In such spaces of racial, cultural, and/or class homogeneity, I am sometimes marked by the social constructions of whiteness that presumes my complicity in subtle reproductions of middle class white privilege (see also, Newman, 2011).

For example, the following comments from the Director provide an example of how colorblind "race talk" (Bonilla-Silva, 2002) was sometimes deployed in my presence without ever specifically naming those identified:

> …[in Baltimore] you're dealing with a lot of uneducated communities that just don't get it, and they're lazy and they're drug addicted, and the poverty levels are such that they're just not proactive enough… a lot of them are knowledgeable but *they're knowledgeable in working the system*. And, we need to—we being government and community members—need to revamp the system because it's broken…I had one of my students who had a baby during the program and she can't even take care of herself, let alone a child. And our system rewards her and gives her more money for having this child. That's where some of the inadequacies exist. And I don't know how you fix it…One of the beautiful things about fitness is *it can be done for free*. And *people can take it into their own hands to improve themselves* from a health standpoint and if we were more preventive in doing so, we'd save lots and lots of healthcare dollars by doing it" (BMoreFit Director, personal interview, 2010)

Post-interview Fieldnotes (2010): Perhaps he wouldn't have said it like that if he really knew me; knew what I stand for? I mean, I am also an educated white man like himself, and I did used to work as a personal trainer, but how can he just assume I would agree with all that?? In trying to accentuate my personal trainer credentials and experience to gain access, am I enabling these sorts of comments?

In such moments, I became more aware of the subtle functioning of these ideological positions and viewed them as powerfully articulated, yet subtly manifested, expressions of racism, paternalistic philanthropy, and sovereign whiteness (Feagin, 2013; Lipsitz, 2006). Questioning myself as an embodied participant however, I struggled to reconcile my purposes and axiological commitments as a researcher. Just as Newman (2011) found that his "white skin, Southern drawl, "hillbilly" vernacular, and masculine deportment" (p. 551) provided him with unfettered access to the exclusive and divisive

social spaces of the "sporting south," I too drew upon my experiences within the fitness profession, and spaces of religious conservatism, to perform an articulate, unpretentious, white middle class fitness professional. Without having to say much, my credentials seeming to "fit" the assumptions that preceded me on account of my race, education, and fitness experience, I would often be accepted without question, taken seriously by my word alone, and made privy to "insider" information without much effort. In this scenario, my whiteness, educational capital, and experience in the fitness industry combined to provide relatively unquestioned access to the BMoreFit program and its constituents; yet another example of how white privilege operates socially, economically, politically, and culturally (Feagin, 2013; Feagin & O'Brien, 2003).

As I get up to leave the interview in which the Director made these comments, I am sorely vexed; troubled by the thought that I might be enabling such views to remain unchallenged, while simultaneously fascinated by the rich significance of the exchange as a source of "data." I shake the Director's hand and thank him for his time. Not a single person of color do I see as I make my way down the hallway, past the free-weights room, past the locker rooms, past the squash courts, past the smoothie-bar, past the front desk where the woman working offers me a quaint parting gesture, "see you next time" with a wide smile. In this exclusive space—a space of bodywork, the presentation of the body, and the deployment of markers of social status, that not only suggest who is able to occupy the space, but how they occupy it—I can fit right in. Yet, rarely do I ever feel comfortable in such spaces of exclusivity, privilege, and whiteness. It is also a frustrating reality that while I am deeply critical of the race and class politics operating within such spaces, I am also simultaneously familiar with, and occasionally unintentionally complicit in, their reproduction (Feagin, 2013; Lipsitz, 2006; McIntosh, 1989).

In an era of post-civil rights amnesia, I argue that such unearned privileges of whiteness are being subtly reformulated to disguise and deny their very existence, even as the operation of white power and privilege routinely manifests itself under the guise of "class" disparity (Feagin, 2013). In classrooms (Rodriguez, 2009), sporting spaces (Newman, 2011), and in the home (Ellis, 2009), critical scholar pedagogues have wrestled with the expressions and actions of racist whites, or the deeply embedded mindset of white privilege and arrogance that perpetuates the "new racism" (Hill-Collins, 1997). In these instances, scholars conducting critical and self-reflexive (auto)ethnographies in "familiar" spaces of whiteness, revealed the often deep-rooted, (sub)conscious patterns of racism and white supremacy, that permeate the ubiquitous, yet disjunctured, social positions of whiteness (Feagin, 2010, 2013; Feagin & Vera, 1995). That which is often hidden, disguised, and coded, seeps through the cracks in what is perceived to be an "acceptable" context; a racially homogenous space of whiteness.

Musings on challenging white privilege

In seeking to continually challenge my own white privilege, and untangle myself from the normalized and taken for granted systems of white power that are daily reproducing patterns of oppression and inequality, I am occupying a potentially conflicting position, which as Ware (2002a) suggests, resides in the "epistemological stickiness and ontological wiggling imminent in whiteness" (p. 29). The question is then raised that since some white writers are motivated, "partly from a recognition that their 'whiteness' ties them historically into a system of race privilege from which it is hard to escape, but by providing a critique of whiteness, they begin to situate themselves outside that system. Does this mean that they are in two places at once?" (p. 29). On one side, Bonilla-Silva (2002) suggests that

many whites position themselves to be "race neutral" or, through appeals to colorblind mythology, avoid the issue of race altogether and deny the historical and contemporary manifestations of racism that (re)produce conditions of inequality (Farough, 2004). But how does racial conscientization (Freire, 2000)—a process of coming to see, know, and critique structures of racism and white supremacy and their a/effects on oppressed groups—impact the positionality and material realities of individuals living within, and often benefiting from, consciously or not, such deeply ingrained institutional, systemic, and cultural systems? Such personal internal conflict can be surmised from the self-reflexive comments of Kyle Leathers for example, who, engaging in a community-based autoethnography (see, for example, Stringer, 1997) of whiteness and education, suggests that,

> Whiteness is ethereal (Nakayama & Krizek, 1995). As a white man, I have always felt misplaced; I never quite fit in. This started with my family and was cemented through institutions. Courts, education, the military, and rock-and-roll, make me feel my whiteness is outside the parameters of privilege. I am not surprised by Kincheloe and Steinberg's (2000) observation that white youth define themselves around the denial of the benefits of their whiteness. However, my experience beckons a question; can I consciously position myself outside of that privilege? (Toyosaki, Pensoneau-Conway, Wendt, & Leathers, 2009, pp. 67-68)

As a youth, I was more apt to position myself outside of that privilege also, but for different reasons, that I nevertheless must contend with as a critical scholar. My immersion in the cultures of my peers, and their positioning of me as, "only white on the outside" functioned in peculiar ways to reinforce a sense of self that I was in fact, different. Having learned to see the hypocrisies of whiteness through the way my peers described it, such sensibilities nonetheless produce occasional conflict as I continue to border cross, engage new spaces and communities, and perform the pluralistic Self(s) I have created out of participation in the diverse spatial contexts and conjunctures of my life (Newman, 2011). Drawing upon my lived experience, I interpellate my habitus—a concept taken from Pierre Bourdieu to

describe a "system of lasting unconscious dispositions and acquired schemes of thought and action, perception, and appreciation, based on individuals' integrated social experiences under specific sets of objective social conditions" (Booth & Loy, 1999, p. 5)—with a particular, and often contradictory, way of thinking about, and moving within, different racialized contexts where interpretations of one's embodiment, identity, and authenticity remain implicitly linked to "a regime of visibility that secures our investment in racial identity" (Seshadri-Crooks, 2000, p. 21). In other words, my authenticity and credibility within black cultural and communal spaces was/is both a source of privilege in terms of my fluidity as a cultural 'border crosser', but also posed significant challenges while wearing the "researcher" hat in mixed race settings within BMoreFit.

Why and how have I sought to escape my own whiteness?
How do I see whiteness?
How does an understanding of whiteness shape me personally?
If an essential whiteness is continually (re)produced out of its distinction from an essentialized production of blackness, how did my engagement with black culture shape my particular conceptualization of my own subjectivity?

In the 'field' and on the street part II: Unraveling expectations (August, 2011)

The visit to James McHenry was somewhat uneventful I thought, as we jumped back into Al's SUV ready to head for the Bentalou center. Perhaps all the excitement around Parkin Street earlier had overshadowed the very brief 10-15 minutes allotted to us to explain to the Recreation Supervisor at James McHenry what we were doing there. Upon entering the center, discombobulated and clearly looking like we had never been there before, a short man of about 35-40 years of age greeted us with a smile. He had very short, dark hair that was faded tight but did little to hide the balding and receding hairline. We said hello and the man introduced himself as Donald, explained how he is in charge of the center at the moment, and that after seeing us walk up the steps, thought to himself that, "Miami Vice must have come up to Baltimore" [laughing].

Me: "I had spoken with [BCRP executive] about handing out surveys to parents and community members at various Rec centers in Baltimore. I tried to call the center here earlier but didn't get an answer…"

Donald: "oh yea? Okay, well I'm the only one here right now but, if you want to, go head and leave 'em over there on that desk. I'll be sure they get handed out.

Me: "Okay, great thank you very much. I just want…

Donald: "Not a problem, not a problem. Glad to help [somewhat abrupt and hurriedly]

Me: …I just want to be sure to explain the survey to someone and get a contact so that we can schedule a time to return to pick them up, and…

Donald: [faint sigh] Alright, alright, I can have a look then. Explain this thing to me.

Just before I cold launch into my attempt at clarification, an already rehearsed and memorized set of lines that described the purpose and protocol for the surveys, I had the feeling that Donald was simply humoring me so we would leave and he could get back to whatever it was he was doing before we arrived. I pushed the thought aside and proceeded to explain it to him and get his contact information so I could return in a few days. However, as I began explaining the survey as I had done several times before, I began to realize how confusing it sounded. The other BCRP employees and volunteers I had spoken with had all nodded and agreed as if to confirm that they fully understood the purpose of the survey, what was required, and who we were trying to poll. I did not pick up on, or really even consider, the fact that they might not have understood it, that they had more important concerns/issues to deal with at the time, or that they might have seen it as a waste of time and/or not a high priority. Donald broke another shred of naivety I had remaining in my somewhat parochial pursuit of currying favor with the Board by carrying out their request for "actionable data." Rather than grant me an agreeable nod and assurance that the surveys would be filled out and returned (which was what I expected given the previous responses and the fact that he seemed ready for us to leave), Donald became more interested and suspicious of the survey's purpose. Was I not explaining it very well this time? Was he

purposefully feigning his misunderstanding in order to make a point? The more I spoke, the more I felt like some pompous asshole that had briefly descended from the ivory tower of academia to consort with "common folk" and question them about their daily lives and experiences with recreation, sport, and physical activity. With confused facial expressions, repeated questioning, and a tone of suspicion and doubt, Donald snapped me out of the academic provincialism that had briefly attended me. In that moment, I remember feeling somewhat foolish for even attempting to distribute paper-based surveys to recreation centers and hoping that respondents would be eager to fill them out. I had good intentions for the survey but I was quickly being reminded about why I don't do survey research, and why it was entirely inappropriate in this particular context.

The whole experience of asking people to take time out of their day to help administer, fill out, and collect surveys was terribly unsettling to me. I did not anticipate experiencing the kind of thoughts and feelings I would encounter through this activity when I agreed to help BMoreFit. Here I was, a young white male PhD candidate, asking poor and working class Black folks to take a break from their recreation and leisure pursuits to fill out a survey on behalf of a non-profit organization run almost entirely by wealthy, middle to upper-class, educated, white folks! Of course, I could, and often did, explain how results from the survey were intended to help improve the effectiveness of non-profit efforts to improve the health of young people in disadvantaged communities across Baltimore. But, as the students in BMoreFit also reminded me, residents of poor black communities have little reason to believe or expect that anything is ever going to change. And why should they? Injustice, inequity, and oppression continue to mark the experience of 21st century urban America. All the promises and well-intentioned efforts of politicians, philanthropists, researchers, or the like, has done little, if anything to generate significant change beyond the limited provision of philanthropic initiatives for a fortunate few. Similar to the explosion of charter school lotteries in poor urban areas, the limited opportunities provided by BMoreFit, and other similar non-profit ventures, provide the proverbial

band-aid over the gaping abscess of governmental neglect and retrenchment (Harvey, 2001; Rose, 1999; Zizek, 2009).

And here I was, standing as the representative face of an organization that I myself questioned and critiqued, conducting a form of research I was less than passionate about, and disseminating a survey that, after really thinking about it, did not even effectively cater to community members (Aside from a general section and a section for 'Parents', the survey primarily sought responses from BCRP employees, schoolteachers, and non-profit leaders). I had followed the guidelines given to me when constructing the survey instrument on behalf of BMoreFit, but now I was feeling fully aware of the fact that I was the one actually carrying out the research, and I had naively acquiesced to their requests. Once out 'in the field' and amongst the people, I became aware of how ineffective the survey was amongst community members in the poorer areas of Baltimore. The whole thing just felt forced, and indeed, it was. While I had put the survey instrument into an online domain and distributed the link through various networks and contacts, I knew that the sample of respondents would more likely reflect the views of those with the means to afford a computer and internet access, and more than likely, would be those who were already "in the know" and connected through the kind of networks through which the survey link was being disseminated. I wanted to be sure that marginalized voices would also be heard in this dialogue, which is why the idea for paper-based surveys took off in the first place.

Nevertheless, as if I had temporarily disarmed my critical consciousness in pursuit of gaining greater access to BMoreFit's Board of Directors (thinking if I did a good job, they would be more willing to open up to me in interviews), my attempt to help BMoreFit by carrying out this study had reminded me about the unsuitability of survey research for understanding the experiences of people. I thought about Sudhir Venkatesh's naïve, yet fortuitous, entrance into the world of Chicago's underground economy by wandering into the projects with a clipboard, pencil, and survey instrument that sought to ask the urban poor about, for example, "how does it feel to be poor and black?" (Venkatesh, 2008). In some small measure, I felt like I

was doing the same thing; that is, making assumptions about the best way to gain important knowledge and insight about an underprivileged group, while at the same time, trying to curry favor with authority figures who could very well have an impact on my own future. If I truly cared about the people whose voices I was trying to make known, I would not be trying to convince them to fill out surveys that I had created according to the purposes, goals, and intentions of BMoreFit. Rather, I would be trying to listen, learn, and respectfully engage with them on their own terms and in the familiar contexts of their daily lives; which is exactly what Venkatesh eventually did.

Unforeseen barriers and the elusiveness of white privilege (April 2011)

As I sit at a table with five former BMoreFit students, I try to speak as a BMoreFit outsider, purposefully distancing myself from my nonetheless blatant, and unavoidable, association with the faculty and Board members. We talk about *them* however, and how *they* govern the program. I seek common ground and shared understanding. My comportment is relaxed, fluid, and calm. But, instead of talking with students as I would talk with faculty, I inevitably find myself speaking differently. Rather than employ the professional voice I would use in a job interview, or when speaking to authority figures, I allow my local vernacular to come forth, to be expressed and heard. It feels more comfortable when I do. I'm not worried about how I sound anymore. I don't have to think hard about what I'm trying to say, how I should say it, and if the people listening are going to approve of what I have to say. I just speak what is on my mind and let the words come out how they will. Inevitably, I also know that this performance serves to signal the authenticity of my enculturation; that I haven't learned to speak this way from listening to hip hop and absorbing media references about popular black culture from afar, but through decades of actual immersion and engagement within black communal spaces (Kitwana, 2005a, 2005b).

I am hopeful that they will feel the level of comfort I am experiencing with them; to feel reassured that despite being a white male adult, I do not share the same politics, lifestyle, and vantage point with others they regularly see and interact with here. I am hopeful they will trust me; see me as an ally; know that, while affiliated with BMoreFit, I am not trying to change or reform their bodies and minds, but I do want them to succeed in the program and use it to their advantage; and I do want to join *with* them and better understand their experiences in the BAC, and in their own communities. I am hopeful they will embrace my presence in the way I have grown accustomed to in my personal life; accept me as a like-minded peer, an unassuming equal, a "cool white boy" that, unlike the real and perceived specters of white male authority figures they have likely encountered (police, schoolteachers, administrators, non-profit organizers, etc.) in their young lives, does not seek to reform their behavior or impose upon them what the status quo thinks is best for them. Passionately, I make my case for a Photovoice project to illuminate the injustice and inequity that surrounds them. I speak with conviction and confidence. But the response is reserved, quiet, and uncertain. It seems that they are not reading me, or my purpose, in the way I had hoped, but it's not their fault. My personal politics and lived experience have been preceded, and indeed, trumped by, my 'official' designation, announced by BMoreFit, as a *researcher* from the University of Maryland, and a former *personal trainer*, who would be assisting the organization. I am, but I'm not. I'm not, but I am, also, one of *them.* Why would I expect to be seen as something different?

From my observations of the program, and comments that students would occasionally make about injustice, I assumed that students would be anxious to make their voices heard if just given the opportunity. But, for any number of reasons—constrained by their conditional participation in the program, the limited amount of time I was able to

spend with them apart from BMoreFit faculty, or the fact that my informal interactions with them may have appeared insincere given the labels BMoreFit had assigned me—the Photovoice project was limited to five students, of whom only two partially completed. Given the right conditions and context however, I still believe they would have engaged and been active in such a project. Each of them was ambitious in their own way, intelligent and determined to succeed despite any barriers placed in their path. Had I failed to provide the right conditions for their involvement? Was the BAC an inappropriate space to introduce the project to students? Perhaps the panoptic nature of the program, and the space in which it occurred, was too imposing and restrictive for students to feel comfortable? Or maybe they were just tired of hearing all the same song and dance about giving back to the community, and providing education about health, without seeing any real and tangible change occurring?

As a BMoreFit "Research Partner," had my change in designation further diminished the possibility of students' seeing me as anything other than another authority figure within the organization (i.e., just another white male with a degree and fitness experience to be precise)? Having discussed some of David's experiences in chapter three, he was also the only student to make a significant attempt at Photovoice, and who gave me a sincere opportunity to dialogue with a student beneath the surface of everyday conversations. In all my attempts to dissociate myself from faculty and develop rapport with students, David also helped me see my own fallibility, both in the capacity of a "researcher," and in the manner in which I had assumed, from my own lived experience, that my credibility within predominantly African American spaces, contexts, and communities, would also become apparent in this context once given the chance to dialogue with students away from the purview of BMoreFit organizers. I thus perceive my own failures in this regard as a residual

outcome of my own elusive white privilege, which has, since I was a young boy, and amongst my closest peers, convinced me that, while possessing the genotypes of Caucasian European descent, I was not entirely "white" in the sense of American racial politics. In their presence, I could pretend that I wasn't actually white, but was something different altogether. I was called an "inside out Oreo," "black on the inside," or my favorite, "pigment challenged." If whiteness is a way of thinking, a "pervasive ideology justifying dominance of one group over others" (Maher & Tetreault, 1998, p. 139), and giving shape to the structure of institutions and discursive regimes which ignore race and racism, rationalize meritocratic ideals, and deny the effects of white privilege and black oppression, then I do consciously position myself outside the boundaries of this "oppressor" subjectivity and consciousness (Castagno, 2008; Seshadri-Crooks, 2000; Toyosaki, et al, 2009). Nevertheless, the subtle manner in which my skin color also functions to confer unearned advantages, and signal a position of privilege, despite my best intentions, is also a lived reality that I cannot entirely dissociate from, and must continuously monitor in order to actively refute. It is an active process through which multiple layers of experience and understanding become critical in working towards the nurturing of critical race consciousness and a politics of hope (Conquergood, 1985; Denzin, 2014).

Furthermore, while I critique BMoreFit for failing students in a number of ways that have been previously explicated, I have also failed them. I have done virtually nothing to better their lives in any meaningful way. I have not provided them with employment opportunities as BMoreFit attempted to do. I have not improved the conditions of their lives materially or socially. I probably taught them very little during the course of our engagements, and certainly less than what they taught me. More important, the fact that I am benefiting from the opportunity to have observed them, and worked with them, is a

troubling and an all too typical outcome of both social research and the enterprise of philanthropy. Again and again, we fail our young people in this country (Giroux, 2009; Grossberg, 2005). In particular, we fail our youth of color (Giroux, 2009, 2012). We fail the poor and oppressed. As a PhD candidate, I cannot fully distance myself from this critique even as I levy it against the organizations, systems, discourses, and institutions responsible for creating, and perpetuating, conditions of injustice and inequality. I am earning a doctoral degree that is partially dependent upon recounting, and representing, the experiences of underprivileged youth who I had sought to "take sides" with and help, but as a result of seeking to also curry favor with BMoreFit gatekeepers had, in retrospect, "sold out" to my research expectations.

Playing the side of privilege (November 2011)

As I sit around a table with the Board of Directors, I am quiet, timid, and a little nervous. I do not speak unless spoken to. I remain vigilantly conscious of my embodied performances (how I move, talk, and interact with others). I am told to help myself to a spread of fancy cheeses, crackers, and caviar, and, of course, what appears to be, some very expensive wine. I pass on the snacks, but, hoping some alcohol will mitigate the anxiety I am experiencing, I *fill* my cup and sit back down. The home is immaculate, spacious, gaudy even. The most outspoken of the Board members likes to host these meetings at her, and her retired husband's, home in the very affluent and exclusive community of Guilford in the Northern part of Baltimore. As I sit patiently, sipping on my generous cup of red wine, I listen to the multiple conversations going on around me, voices comingling as I pick out the most audible statements from which I can infer after scribbling them down surreptitiously:

"…lack of education is the real problem, though…" /

"…so, how did things go last quarter?" /

"it just does not make sense, financially. We need a new approach…" /

"…I can't believe we lost that game. Who was he throwing to anyway?!" /

"I'm pretty confident about my marketing team so we'll see…" /

"…a new car?! Oh, I'm sure she'll just be so excited"

Amidst the chatter, I realize that, instead of using one of the wine glasses at the left end of the table, I had picked up a large red solo cup that was actually meant for juice. As everyone begins to sit down, I become conscious of how my mistake might be perceived as a reflection of my class habitus (the red solo cup filled with alcohol being, in itself, a stereotypical marker of working class preference). Surreptitiously, I take a couple quick gulps so it is less obvious that I have committed a faux pas by putting a copious amount of wine in my cup, instead of an "appropriate" amount in the dainty looking wine glasses everyone else is using.

Not a single person speaks to me. Then again, I don't make much effort to speak to them either. The meeting is brought to order and a number of agenda items are discussed. I remain silent. After a while, the Director announces that I am there to deliver a status update on the progress of the BMoreFit survey study we are conducting on their behalf. After nearly 30 minutes of feeling completely invisible, all eyes focus on me. I look back at their faces, into their eyes, and begin to speak. I am calculated, articulate, and professional in delivering my report concerning the online survey numbers, paper-based surveys disseminated and received, and the challenges we faced in terms of coordinating with recreation center directors. The hostess, and conductor for this particular meeting, interrupts my presentation, suggesting that, as much as she appreciates my efforts, "it is a

waste of time" in light of the new direction they want to go with BMoreFit. "The survey is all well and good but we need to focus on developing the teacher toolkit and cut our losses," she says (Field Notes, November, 2011). A few others agree with her position, while the Director argues briefly for its relevance. I am quiet again, not sure what to do. The Board appears determined to cease all efforts with the summer training program for underserved youth, in favor of developing a physical activity handbook that public school teachers can use in the classroom.

As critical as I have been of BMoreFit, I also cannot help but think of the students and the potential they had to use BMoreFit as a means to an end. Before I am completely silenced, and the next agenda item is brought up however, I quickly retort that, "the summer program could still work with some modest changes." Before I can follow up with an explanation however, the hostess, appearing as if to have missed my comment, calls on another board member to speak on an unrelated issue. "*I'm so done with this bullshit*," I think to myself. Feeling defeated, I choose to again sit in silence until the meeting closes. The Director walks me out to my car. We exchange a few words, schedule a time to talk soon, and I depart. My mind continues to race—I'm still pissed off! I want to expose what I perceive as the hypocrisies of their position; that smug attitude of superiority, that privileged expectation of always having power, of being in complete control and thinking that their way of doing things is best for everyone. But it's not just the attitudes of some of the board that angers me. I can respect their decision to do something charitable, for whatever reason they might have. However, I am just not convinced of the genuineness of the act, and its purpose, when considering the ways in which charity can, and often does, reproduce structures of inequity, dependence, and dehumanization for the oppressed; maintaining power and control in the hands of those who determine the focus and conditions under

which, the needy can receive aid and assistance in the first place (Poppendieck, 1998; Zizek 2009).

I was also distraught by the fact that, during several social gatherings at the BAC (events intended to bring together BMoreFit constituents, including board members, faculty, local media, students and parents), the interaction with students was minimal, and appeared contrived, for the sake of appearances, rather than out of genuine concern for them. They looked more like social networking opportunities being played out under the guise of philanthropic endeavors for the less fortunate. In trying to deconstruct my interpretive process however, I am reminded that the occasionally vitriolic manner in which I sometimes view wealth, privilege, and whiteness is a residual affect of both, my lived experience, lived textuality (Denzin, 2014), and deep connection with the cultures of my peers, as well as my unavoidable exposure to white middle class privilege, and specters of religious and political conservatism which I have, at times, both challenged, and played along with. How then do I reconcile these seemingly incongruent textualities of my personal life and professional work? With regard to such dualities of Self, I am reminded of the need to accept the unguaranteed, and contingent, politics of reflexivity and articulation, within shared spaces of embodied interaction (Giardina & Newman, 2011; Newman, 2011). In seeking to performatively represent the "self" and "Other," I have sought to situate my own body amongst the bodies of two distinctly polarized groups, with which, I nonetheless share numerous identifications, cultural and professional experiences, positional articulations, and preferences and values. Thus, the duality of my own subjectivity proved difficult to negotiate at times within BMoreFit, given the conflation of these previously distinct areas of my personal and academic/professional life.

In the 'field' and on the street part III: Reality check, I'm done…(September, 2011)

After nearly two months of making site visits to Baltimore Rec centers, my mind has been thrown into restless and dizzying bouts of self-reflection concerning the survey instrument and the appropriateness of carrying out this study for BMoreFit. Had I "sold out" and acquiesced to the Board of Directors' request for "actionable data" that could propel BMoreFit towards more effectively reaching their organizational goals? I hate to admit it, but the answer is yes. With the Boards' guidelines, I had designed and developed a study that would cater to their expectations, rather than what would work best to provide meaningful insight without reducing human beings to research subjects or survey statistics. I had given in to producing the kind of data they regarded as "true" science. And the sad truth of the matter is, I did gain greater access to key members of BMoreFit as a direct result of my volunteering to carry out the study. Nevertheless, I was now coming face to face with the reality that I had given up some of my basic axiological beliefs as a critical scholar in order to better position myself within BMoreFit. I was frustrated with myself. I was frustrated with BMoreFit.

Al: Aye, you ready for this one?...Ronnie? You good?

Me: …Yea, yea, I'm good. Just thinking

Al: Well, let's get this done. It's getting late and I gotta be home soon

Me: Okay, I'm ready

As we step out of the car and begin walking towards the stairs leading to the door of the Chick Webb Recreation Center, my body feels sluggish and tired, my mind confused and divided. I want to go home. I want to disappear. Now, it's really feeling forced, this whole project, I think to myself. Like I am a paid employee for BMoreFit and I am just out here doing their bidding. And in reality, I was; just without the getting paid part.

As we make our way up the stairs, I notice a worn down playground around the left side of the building. A few young children are playing in the enclosed area, surrounded by chain link fence. I pull the

handle on the large, steel brown door to no avail. Both sides are locked and given the paucity of people around the building exterior, I begin to wonder if we are too late. Al knocks on the left door and after a few seconds, we hear movement inside, followed by a voice. "Just a minute", the voice proclaims. From behind the door emerges an elderly woman with large glasses and an oversized dress that makes her look like she should be home in bed rather than at the recreation center. After explaining our purpose, she opens the door and, with a gentle voice, welcomes us to the center, proclaiming that, "my nephew had an emergency so I'm just here filling in for a little while. Who are you boys looking for?" As I pull a stack of surveys from my backpack, I explain that we are looking for the center director so we can drop them off. The woman tells us to go and find Nikko upstairs by the basketball court because, "he will know what to do with them." As we walk by ourselves up the staircase, I am taken back by how unorganized and haphazard everything seems to be. The physical structure of the building is clearly in need of dire repairs, the walls and floors are dingy, and the smell of fresh sweat and stale urine mixes dreadfully with the hot humid air. There are unattended kids and young teenagers everywhere.

At the top of the stairs, I look over to my right to see a large muscular man about 6 feet 5 inches tall, and weighing anywhere from 275 to 300 pounds I would imagine. The late Michael Clarke Duncan comes to mind, although this man has at least a little hair on his head, thicker eyebrows, and a slightly smaller nose. He is standing in front of a doorway leading to the weight room, which, as I quickly glance at as we walk past, looks like it has been housing the same equipment since the 1980s. I make eye contact and nod my head to the man, "hey, what's goin on?" to which he responds with a nod of his own. With every step toward the double doors opening to the basketball gym, the chatter in the hallway grows quieter, the lump in my throat grows larger, and I notice more and more eyes fixating upon Al and I. By the time we reach the gym, time feels like it's moving in slow motion. As we pass through the doorway, pausing briefly to look for someone that looks like they work here, a dozen young men lining the far right wall under the basketball hoop stare in our direction. All of a sudden, ten other young men, a few of them a bit older, perhaps in their

twenties or thirties, sprint towards our end of the gym following a resounding rebound (securing the ball by forcefully clasping it in both hands with a loud smack) and quick outlet pass from the left side of the gym. In an instant, they reach the end of the court where we are standing inside the doorway. The ball handler puts up a rushed three-point attempt while everyone else pauses to look. Time is no longer in slow motion. Time is standing still. The ball bounces off the front of the rim and hits the floor, bouncing three more times before one of the young men standing under the hoop grasps hold of it.

A moment of silence passes before I can look over to my right and open my mouth to ask a man standing near the door if he knows where we can find Nikko? He motions to the opposite corner of the gym, "see the guy over there wit the locs?" I reply with a "yes." "There you go," he says. As we begin walking across the floor, I try to acknowledge as many people as I can make eye contact with. Clearly we are interrupting their game and I want to minimize the inconvenience as much as possible. I also really want to start playing with them though. Show them I'm not some square ass white boy that can't ball, or that plays the game with that stereotypically white, 'rural' style of pass and shoot fundamentals (Carlston, 1983). Since grade school, experience has taught me how quickly respect can be earned with the "right" kind of expressive performance in basketball. However, I also know you don't just walk onto a court surrounded by people and expect to start playing, especially when you don't know anyone. As we reach Nikko, the game finally resumes after what seemed like 10 minutes of awkward silence, but was in fact more like 30 seconds. Nikko is short and skinny with dreadlocks that reach near the middle of his back. He is probably in his late twenties. An array of intricate tattoo designs reveal themselves from under the sleeves of his all white t-shirt, and black jean shorts that reach past his knees. His back is turned to us as we approach, so we wait patiently as it appears he is looking for something. On the floor lie several worn and deflated basketballs so I am certain he is looking for a pump. It feels awkward standing here behind him like this though, just watching and waiting for him to turn around. I decide to speak up. "Excuse me my man, are you Nikko? Nikko turns his head around, his body crouched down, and responds in the affirmative.

Al and I briefly explain our purpose with the BMoreFit organization and ask if he would be willing to help us distribute some surveys to people using the center. "Surveys?" Nikko begins to laugh incredulously. "What the hell ya'll surveying for round here?" I proceed to tell Nikko more about BMoreFit and their intentions to help disadvantaged youth in Baltimore learn about fitness and health so they can become employed in the industry. We talk for a few minutes more, him telling me about the struggles young people face in Baltimore, and me responding with agreeable statements that eventually lead into how we want to provide greater opportunities for physical activity and health by first gaining the perspectives of people in the community. Before Nikko can respond, I realize that I just carried out our conversation solely as a representative of BMoreFit however. I had not even explained who I really was. I had not explained that I was really only doing this survey work to appease the organization that had welcomed me, and allowed me to carry out my own research observations and interviews. I was playing a role and maintaining the façade of my BMoreFit position. I was suspending my criticisms of survey research, of positivist dogma, of a re-emergent scientism that influenced the Board and Director's assumption that survey data would provide the "best" results (Andrews, 2008), and of the organization itself. I had to promote it as a potentially positive force in the Baltimore community in order to justify doing something like this. And to Nikko, like several others, I did just that. But now I was feeling more and more unsettled by it. As I talk, Nikko nods occasionally.

> *Nikko: "Oh aight, okay, that's real shit. So, what you need wit me, just help passin em out then?"*
>
> *Me: "Yea, I mean, basically we'd like to just ask if you'd be willing to help us?"*

I ask Nikko if he can encourage as many different people who regularly visit the center (young and old, male and female, parents and kids, teenagers, etc.) to take some time to fill out the survey and return it to him to hold until we return to pick them up. I pull out a stack of surveys and tell Nikko that we would like to leave him with 20 for now.

Nikko: Aight, so get 20 people from in here and tell em fill these out? [thumbing through the pages].

Al: Yea, and we'll be back in a few days to pick em up.

Nikko: Oh aight, aint no problem bruh. Ima make these knuckleheads do it [playfully shoving another young man walking past]. They aint got no choice! [laughing and with a loud voice so all the young men in the basketball gym can hear. They pay little mind to Nikko's pronouncement however]

Me: I mean, yea, we definitely appreciate it Nikko…but, you know, you don't gotta make anyone do it if they don't wanna. We just tryin get a good sample of different people…

Nikko: I got you, I got you [pauses]…but you know, niggas ain't gon be all anxious fillin this out though, you know that right? They playin ball, liftin weights, why they gonna do this?

Me: I mean, that's what im sayin, you know, I don't want you to ask no one to do it if they don't wanna.

Al: [nods in agreement]

Nikko: Yea, okay…Still, you gotta think. Why somebody gonna wanna do this? What they gettin from it? An this aint no quick little survey neither.

Me: You right…you right…

At this point I am feeling imprudent about agreeing to do this survey work for BMoreFit. I should have just politely declined. Nikko is absolutely, 100% right, and I know it! The survey is not going to ask the "right" kind of questions to adequately reflect the interests and concerns of community members. And even if it could, the responses would still be limited by the nature of the survey instrument itself. And who really wants to fill out a survey anyway?! I know I don't. Further, the Board did not express an interest in knowing the opinions of the everyday, working class, Baltimorean so it was not specifically formulated for them. Rather, they wanted the views of physical education teachers, non-profit organizers, BCRP officials, and other key stakeholders in the areas of youth, fitness, and physical education. I was handling that part just fine (mainly via the online-based survey), but I also wanted them to have some perspectives from the

communities that they claimed to be helping; those who would not be readily reached by the online distribution channels. I wanted to give BMoreFit information, perspectives, and ideas from the mouths of these folks, and also provide it in a form that they considered to be, credible, generalizable, and valid (i.e., surveys and statistics). So, I went out on a limb. I hastily ventured into conducting survey research and it was backfiring. From my little quaint and secluded office in the ivory tower of academia, I had assumed too much; particularly about the likelihood that local residents would somehow jump at the opportunity to "make their voices heard" in some ridiculous survey. For what purpose? For whom? A survey? Really? How is a survey going to reflect the interests, concerns, and everyday realities of residents in West Baltimore? How is this going to help with anything at all?! I was growing increasingly pessimistic about the whole project. Nikko continues with his justifiable critique:

> *Nikko: Like, I feel you, you know, what ya'll tryin do an all but this just look…I mean, damn, how many pages this thing? [laughing]*
>
> *Al: [laughing] yea, it definitely not a quick thing to do.*
>
> *Me: I know man, I know. Its not really how I would have liked to do this but…*
>
> *Nikko: [laughing] yea, no doubt…but aye, look my dude, aint nothing to worry bout, they young kids in here, they old folks here, females too, an shit. So, I mean, I'll find somebody do it, aight?*
>
> *Me: Appreciate that Nikko, for real…*
>
> *Al: Yea, much respect Nikko*
>
> *Nikko: No doubt ya'll. Come on, bouta go back downstairs*

We follow Nikko back across the gym, through the double doors, down the hallway, turn past the weight room, and finally down the stairway towards the front desk. I tell the old lady at the desk, "thank you" as we pass by. She smiles and tells us to have a "blessed day." At the door, we customarily exchange hands with Nikko, thanking him for his time and willingness to help with the surveys. I remind him that I will contact him on Friday to see how things are going and to see when I can return to pick up the completed

surveys. "I got you, I got you" he replies. As we walk down the stairs from the front door, Al and I begin to chat about our visit with Nikko and how we thought it went.

Although still a bit flustered by Nikko's critique of our survey strategy, I begin to feel good about the fact that he did not just take the surveys (like others had done previously), and what we had to say, at face value. He had not tried to quickly dismiss us by indulging our work. Instead, Nikko had checked us; he checked me. I began thinking more about the multiple roles I was playing at that point (BMoreFit Research Partner; Graduate student; Researcher doing fieldwork; Participant-observer of BMoreFit) and how I should be viewing the purpose of these visits. Nikko had clearly pointed out the problems associated with this endeavor. And while I still needed to make the effort to complete this project on behalf of BMoreFit, I started thinking more about how I could view and interpret these activities. I began thinking that my only consolation is that I am able to use this entire experience as part of my ethnographic engagement with BMoreFit and maybe glean some new insights from these visits. It was a unique opportunity that I got to see, hear, and engage with people from the very communities that BMoreFit is desirous to help, but attempt to do so from a presumably "safe" distance. Perhaps to assuage some of my guilt and embarrassment for trying to do this survey research, I think to myself, at least I am here. At least I am making an honest effort to engage with people and try to understand their struggles and points of view. I had also previously attempted to disseminate and collect surveys from community members myself, before the Director of the Patapsco Recreation Center advised me that this was "inappropriate solicitation" and that I would need to coordinate with all Center Directors to achieve my survey goals.

From the rich neighborhoods to the poor ones; from the black neighborhoods to the white ones; from the urban to the suburban, the divisions are so blatant, so engrained, that they appear natural and beyond the possibility for change. And while there are numerous non-profit and public-private organizations, similar to BMoreFit, attempting to intervene in ameliorating the outcomes of such divisions and inequities, they can only provide what amounts to a band aid on a grossly divisive system that preserves access and opportunity for the

fortunate, while neglecting and ignoring the dispossessed. My own participation in this organization makes me feel complicit, like the only thing I have done to challenge the reproduction of the oppressive systems and pedagogies upon which this form of philanthropy is built, is to write about it. I'm done. I can't do this anymore. Not with BMoreFit anyway…

Coda: Accepting the limits of performative engagement

As much as the previous narratives were meant to textualize significant moments of embodied experience, inner conflict, and reflexive thinking while working on behalf of BMoreFit, I also found that the events depicted therein represented important processes of shared dialogue and performative presence. In one of our visits to the Patapsco Recreation Center for example, the Director invited Al and me into the main office where we shared hot dogs, Shasta sodas, and chips with a few parents and youth (quite unhealthy foods, but what the center could afford to provide for an event held earlier that day). Graciously invited in as guests, we paused our efforts with promoting the survey and instead, laid back and enjoyed eating foods that I/we would normally avoid, and participating in rich meaningful dialogue with local community members. In bringing up our purpose of seeking to understand the perspectives of Baltimore residents with regard to health and fitness, several parents communicated their everyday struggles and concerns with keeping kids safe, healthy, and ensuring their futures within troubled environments; the underfunded and often poorly maintained spaces of public recreation being a key point of debate.

Asking about such topics via a survey seemed even more pointless. Here we were discussing such viewpoints organically and without provocation. My heart ached for these parents. I vocalized my empathy for their plight and expressed my sincere hope that the allocation of funding for public recreation and health would someday reverse its long

trending retrenchment. The creative privatization of health and fitness, including all its consolations of social provision through privately funded philanthropic fitness initiatives for a select few, is not going to provide enough support to counter the massive social inequities created by neoliberalization. Our country is deeply troubled in this regard. The pursuit of health reformations has to develop with a broader, collaborative, and dialogic purpose that acknowledges social determinants and works to advocate for greater equity in physical activity, fitness, and health opportunities. In writing about my experiences with people in Baltimore, and within BMoreFit, I have attempted to capture some of the worldviews, perceptions, hopes, and ambitions of those who experience, create, and act upon ideals of fitness and health with varying degrees of access and opportunity. It is my hope that such reflections can contribute to a larger dialogue and movement that advocates on behalf of those lacking resources for physical activity, fitness, and health as a result of decades of neoliberalization.

Denzin (2014) suggests that, "autoethnographic work must always be interventionist, seeking to give notice to those who may otherwise not be allowed to tell their story or who are denied a voice to speak" (p. 6). In attempting to performatively reconstruct lived experience, and the processes of ethnographic inquiry and co-construction of knowledge, I have endeavored to produce writing that "transgresses structures of domination—a kind of writing which reproduces the struggle for voice of those on the wrong side of the power relationship" (Clough, 1988, p. 3, cited in Denzin, 2014, p. 6). While the materiality of my own embodiment has not personally positioned me on the wrong side of such power relationships, my life experience and multiple identifications (Essed, 1994) have long beckoned me to act on behalf of the disempowered, marginalized, and oppressed. I have thus written self-reflexive narratives that reconstruct moments of my participation with such

individuals, in spaces neglected and avoided by the white middle class, the privileged and powerful. On behalf of BMoreFit, I entered into communities that program organizers identified as too dangerous to drive through, let alone walk around in. In doing so however, I also became more aware of my own white privilege, particularly the assumptions I made concerning my ability to border cross and advocate on behalf of the marginalized, oppressed, and silenced, who sometimes do not wish to "speak" (Rodriguez, 2011).

The researching narratives in this chapter not only reflect experiential interpretations of everyday life in "urban" Baltimore, but also the internal questioning of the research act, and the implications it had for those involved in our shared dialogic encounters. As Denzin (2014, p. 80) notes, "the performance text can only be dialogic, a text that does not speak about or for the other, but which 'speaks to and with them' (Conquergood, 1985, p. 10)." Although still questioning how well I have represented such encounters, engaging with the past and seeking to bring it alive in the historical present (Denzin, 2014; Richardson, 2001), this process of dialogic reflexive writing has also revealed hidden truths and submerged memories about myself that I have sought to exhume, articulate, and contextualize. I have thus written myself into the existential moments of research practice, hoping to advance new forms of qualitative research and writing that takes seriously, the embodied and dialogic contingencies of shared social interaction. It is my hope that in doing so, I am further opening the door of legitimacy within PCS to explore the biographical, dialogic, and embodied dimensions of auto/ethnographic research practice (Giardina & Newman, 2011).

Written at a time in my life when I was finally freed from the silences of my nonetheless begrudging participation in religious institutions of heteronormative white patriarchy, this chapter represents an attempt to reflexively challenge such systems of synergized oppression. In doing so, I have also, to paraphrase Clough (1990), set out again

to know myself, and through the process of reflexive writing, embraced a "performance aesthetic [which] refuses assimilation to White middle-class norms and the traumas of that culture" (Denzin, 2014, p. 73). Thus, I trace the historicity of my own traumas through the juxtaposition of white middle-class norms, and the religious conservatism of my Mother and Stepfather's families, with the quite divergent (white and black) working class cultures of my father's and friend's families, respectively.

Conscious of my identifications with both faculty and students in BMoreFit, as well as community members and non-profit leaders, I negotiated the performative and embodied politics of my life experience to develop relationships with those involved. However, caught between the existential power arrangements of white fitness philanthropists and underserved black youth, my first time as a "researcher" within such an environment precluded me from border crossing in the manner I was used to. In this context, I could do little to counteract the more blatantly apparent commonalities I shared with faculty on account of my race, educational privilege, and fitness experience. Therefore, as much as I have critiqued the pedagogical middle class whiteness of BMoreFit, and the failure to address racial disparity in particular, I have also criticized myself for failing to do more on behalf of students. As much as BMoreFit benefitted from media exposure, grant funding, and community support, my participation has provided the means through which to produce this dissertation. The benefits to the 2009 and 2010 BMoreFit students however, are varied and far less certain. In the concluding section, I provide a final rendering of philanthropic failures and physical cultural fissures before discussing the current state of BMoreFit in 2014.

EPILOGUE

A neoliberalizing non-profit: The problems of addressing the health of "urban" youth

As the very title of this dissertation suggests, my embodied engagements with, and interpretations of, fitness philanthropy in Baltimore reveals some of the flaws of well-intentioned, yet inadequately prepared, private citizens who, in the midst of failures of the state, have sought to intervene in matters of community health in new and creative ways. BMoreFit was the personal project of one such individual; an extremely ambitious and outgoing fitness professional who saw an opportunity to use his extensive fitness industry experience to change young people's lives. A tremendously popular idea amongst many of Baltimore's elite class of citizens, the Director's savvy networking skills proved worthwhile in securing both financial investment (through an approved $60,000 grant from the Open Society Institute of Baltimore) community support (recruiting local fitness professionals to serve as "faculty" instructors to BMoreFit "students"), and the support of local governmental agencies (YO Baltimore and the Mayor's Office for Employment Development) to develop, and execute, a rigorous pedagogical fitness training program for underprivileged youth.

Set within the broader landscapes of severe socio-spatial division and inequity that is far too common and taken for granted within urban environments like Baltimore, BMoreFit was nonetheless bizarrely microcosmic of the very same (race and class) polarizations it proclaimed to be aimed at alleviating. In other words, individuals in positions of privilege and power (white, middle to upper class, educated, fitness professionals, business owners, and entrepreneurs who made up the Board of Directors, Faculty, and Director) embarked on a philanthropic venture to counteract the perceived pathologies of childhood obesity, youth

delinquency, crime and violence, within *their* city. From a grounded, contextual, and intuitive interpretive standpoint, I perceived the motivations of BMoreFit organizers as a mixture of well intentioned, yet misguided philanthropy that emerged from moral panics over the perception of "unhealthy," "lazy," and "uneducated" populations, particularly as embodied by the visible presence of underserved black youth seemingly lacking direction and discipline.

Further elucidated through my reading of Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy, I interpreted the intense goal-orientations and disciplined programmatic structure of BMoreFit as the immanent products of a privileged worldview of whiteness and middle class ethos (Feagin, 2012; Lipsitz, 2006). Subtly imbued within rhetoric that proclaimed to be "fighting childhood obesity in Baltimore," such a view imagines the poor and indignant, unhealthy and destitute as being misguided and in need of reformative efforts to alter behavior and lifestyle. Of course, when the privileged, wealthy, and white see themselves as the arbiters of knowledge, promoters of social change, and role models for healthy living, the zeal of their philanthropic interventions towards the underserved becomes problematic. With no intention to alter structural conditions, individuals from poorer and predominantly African American communities become targeted by interventions that reflect the values, practices, and desired outcomes of the privileged philanthropist who conditionally offers aid. Inevitably, this process also proceeds in concert with efforts to protect Baltimore's gentrified spaces of privilege, commercialism, and touristization from the perceived encroachment of "urban" undesirables (Silk & Andrews, 2006;). The Director's own words in this regard were frighteningly telling of how normalized and unproblematic such a view has become within a polarized metropolis like Baltimore:

> Probably two years ago, I was in a neighborhood presentation given by the Baltimore City police on gang violence because I live in a neighborhood

> that's on the edge, and often you get people walking through the neighborhood who look a little shady. And they wanted to educate the community members about what to look for and identify as gang members; they wear certain clothes, they wear different colors, they use certain graffiti to identify, you know, their gangs and their families. And as I was sitting there and listening to the presentation, I was thinking, "wouldn't it be great if I could take my years of fitness experience and be able to create gangs of fitness ambassadors who could create healthier cities versus tear them apart

From such unanticipated, and occasionally shocking revelations, I began viewing the purpose and intentions of BMoreFit through an even more critical lens of white paternalism and neoliberal multiculturalism (Melamed, 2006), through which, I interpreted the pedagogies of BMoreFit as specific technologies of discipline and lifestyle reformation. More specifically, I considered this a targeted effort to assimilate and enculturate underprivileged black youth to the lifestyle habitus, and embodied politics commonly associated with white middle class fitness and health, because such practices are perceived to be the most effective way to be a healthy and productive member of society. Drawing upon the concept of healthism, I found that the particular manifestations of neoliberal logic emanating from the Director, faculty, and others within the BAC, were indeed, rooted in an intense concern and preoccupation with the body, both at the level of the individual, and the collective social body (a moral health crisis). The ideas of individualism and self-made success function so fluidly and persuasively within the context of fitness, as it is only on, and through, the embodied actions of the individual, that one can change physical composition towards some idealized shape marking the achievement of so called "success." Yet, when uncritically and naively promulgated as guiding philosophies for life, the neoliberal healthism of BMoreFit organizers proved to be problematic, both from my own interpretive position, but also as reflected in the occasional disagreements students had with BMoreFit pedagogies (see chapter 3). As an embodied participant, I inferred from observations and interviews

that there were three primary ways in which neoliberalization processes and the ideology of healthism were reproduced within the BAC space and the programming of BMoreFit:

1. BMoreFit provided a spectacle of white benevolence, and a false perception of success that was held up as proof that privatized social welfare and health education are working.
2. BMoreFit pedagogy strongly emphasized responsibilizing discourses and ideals of neoliberal healthism. The curricular structure itself resembled a "work fare" program in terms of strict rules, regulations, mandatory participation, and a paid wage.
3. Advanced an ethic of multiculturalism that Melamed (2006) suggests is the "spirit of neoliberalism" because its manifestations serve to deny the significance and impact of race, and promote a naïve post-racial view shrouded by the seemingly more important imperatives of health (i.e., "its not about race, its about childhood obesity").

In each of these ways, BMoreFit attempted to engrain particular logics about health that were reflective of organizers' experience, education, and positionality. Subsequently, this leads one to wonder about the dreadfully profound embeddedness of neoliberalism as a cultural perspective, normalized within the popularized discourses and spaces of fitness and health (Coakley, 2011). As privileged philanthropists and fitness professionals, the lack of cultural competency to more fully engage with young people from severely polarized and underserved Baltimore neighborhoods was a significant barrier to meaningful learning and philanthropic praxis. As I argued in chapter three, the failure to engage race and ethnicity was both an outcome of oversight, and a failure to consult with professionals and community members of color to appropriately develop a curriculum and program goals that

would best help the young people targeted by the intervention. As a key factor contributing to the failure of BMoreFit to realize their ultimate goal of reducing childhood obesity through the education of underserved youth, I argued that this was connected to assumptions of privileged whiteness and acceptance of neoliberal ideals (Feagin, 2013; Feagin & O'Brien, 2003; Lipsitz, 2006; Melamed, 2006). Subsequently, when students did not progress through the program as desired, the relative lack of critical dialogue between students and program organizers resulted in various misunderstandings that reflected the inability of BMoreFit to tailor appropriate forms of pedagogical programming to underserved groups. While I have thoroughly critiqued this reality as contributing to the fact that the training program only ran for two years (summers of 2009 and 2010), the reformulation of BMoreFit after 2011 is worth brief consideration.

The New BMoreFit: A better approach?

At the time of writing, BMoreFit has shifted their focus from the hands-on fitness training of underserved youth to developing partnerships with Baltimore elementary schools in order to bring fitness into the classroom. According to their new website:

> The Baltimore Fitness Academy (BMoreFit) trains and inspires elementary students and teachers to learn the value of healthy living, where the budget for physical education is underfunded. Our mission is to equip our teachers with the skills and materials needed to engage and motivate their students in physical movement, which has the added benefit of helping students to focus during their academic lessons. We work to ensure that our students understand the long-term benefits of living a healthy lifestyle, thus decreasing the possibility of long-range health problems (www.bmorefit.org)

Indicative of this new focus and direction, I found it interesting that as early as 2010, the director and members of the board seemed convinced that they needed to focus on younger individuals who would be more easily instructed about health and fitness. In other words,

the difficulties of managing the behavior and learning processes of "at-risk" and underserved youth were more than program organizers could handle. The failures of the 2009 and 2010 summer training programs clearly reflected the fact that the organization did not possess the capacities to effectively engage with young adults from underserved populations. As I have indicated, the lack of a diverse faculty, relevant cultural experience, critical dialogue with community members and students, and the inability to effectively engage with race and racism as a significant health determinant, prohibited BMoreFit from achieving their goal of transforming the lifestyles and health behaviors of underserved black youth. A creative idea with good intentions, the location of the program within an elite health club space also had certain implications, of which, I suggested that the privileged racial and class homogeneity and spectacle of whiteness was problematic because:

1) It associates good health (i.e., fit body) with white and middle class
2) There are few individuals for students to identify with, which educational research (Miller & Endo, 2005; Milner, 2006; Pollack, 2004; Quiocho & Rios, 2000) proclaim is important for minority youth, particularly from isolated and impoverished areas.
3) Students suggested that they felt "out of place" and "uncomfortable" at times within the BAC (Field notes, August 2010). By training students in an exclusive commercial health club space, their perception that fitness practices and idealized forms of embodiment are "mostly things that only white people do" (Tyler, personal communication, August 2010) was counterproductive to the purpose of instilling healthy lifestyle habits.

My purpose in recounting these observational interpretations here is because I believe their new approach has effectively resolved the racial and class chasms that prevented meaningful dialogue and effective learning. By employing a more managed approach that puts

schoolteachers in the role of physical educator in the classroom, even younger students (kindergarten to fifth grade) now learn about physical activity and health in familiar schooling environments with their peers. In short, BMoreFit has developed a Teacher Toolkit that is intended to inform schoolteachers about physical education and how to implement physical activity breaks in the classroom. Citing research that demonstrates enhanced learning as a result of physical activity (for example, the Designed to Move 2013 health report and the Baltimore City Health Department Gap Survey in 2011), it is believed that by instituting small periods of group exercise instruction students will become more physically active, learn the importance of physical activity for health and longevity, and enhance their overall academic performance.

Following the unsuccessful attempt to reform the health behaviors and lifestyles of "at-risk" and underserved youth, BMoreFit has more effectively mobilized their efforts to mitigate childhood obesity by targeting elementary age children in schools that already lack adequate funding for physical activity, sport, and recreation. Importantly, they are addressing a dire need for physical activity in schools, which as a result of neoliberalization processes, has not only resulted in less funding for physical education programs, but also devalued their importance amidst the pressures on academic testing in the era of No Child Left Behind (see Castagno, 2008; Giroux, 2009). In this regard, I consider this reformulated approach to be of significantly greater value because it is less intrusive as a targeted intercession. Instead of developing an intervention that directly targets a group of people for their perceived delinquency, ill-health, and disregard for civil society (i.e., hapless youth involved in gangs), the response to a specific institutional need (lack of funding and resources for physical activity in city schools) reflects more of a focus on inequitable structural impediments to good health.

Critically, I have argued how the imposition of healthy lifestyle practices within BMoreFit was problematic because they individualized fitness as a civic responsibility, largely ignoring the environmental conditions and circumstances that result in significant health disparities between segregated populations. In vying to produce "fitness ambassadors" who could incite healthy change in their own communities, the pressure to reform BMoreFit students within a professionalized context of elite fitness overextended an appropriate level of instruction that could have planted the seeds for students to potentially reform their own health, if they so choosed. Conversely, in the elementary school approach, the importance of being physically active is inherently expressed by a familiar and trusted teacher who devotes time and attention to fun physical activities in the classroom. This approach also mitigates the problematic potential of racial, class, and cultural misunderstandings between the authoritative power of a white fitness professional or BMoreFit philanthropist and the disempowered position of underserved black youth as the recipients of charity. It also takes place within an educational space of the public sphere, rather than a commercialized space of privatized fitness.

Further, because physical activity, sport, and recreation have long been important features of public education, the nationally declining emphasis on their importance makes BMoreFit's reformulated philanthropic approach that much more significant. While others might learn about health and find opportunities for physical activity unproblematically within the private sector, there remains a vital need to provide such knowledge and services to underserved populations that have suffered through waves of neoliberalization (Giroux, 2005, 2012; Harvey, 2001;) and been left to sort out for themselves how to survive the crumbling infrastructures of a dilapidated Baltimore city. Thus, the application of a privatized philanthropic initiative within the established institutional structures of public

education may just represent the kind of partnership that can effectively promote healthy change within Baltimore in years to come. Although possibly another reformulation of neoliberal socialization within spaces of "actually existing neoliberalism" (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; see also, Gough, 2002), the basic premise of physical education for the underserved at least maintains a progressive potential if enacted through partnerships with local community leaders and educators. If the goal of equitable provision in education and health is taken seriously, there exists the possibility for privileged philanthropists to support and revitalize decaying public institutions that once provided these essentials at no cost to American citizens. This is especially critical given the fact that underserved, predominantly African American, communities have been twice denied full access to equitable provision on account of racial hostilities (de facto post war segregation and discrimination) and later shifts in American political economy (deindustrialization, white flight, urban disinvestment, and the subsequent gentrification and neoliberal re-structuring of the urban core) that has altered the terrain of the American racial formation (Wacquant, 2007, 2009).

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Inquiry

As previously intimated, my engagements with BMoreFit took several unexpected turns that complicated the process of data collection and analysis. Most significantly, the cancellation of the 2011 summer training program drastically altered my access to BMoreFit students and limited my direct observations of BMoreFit pedagogy to the 2010 program only. Although I was able to meet with students from 2009, and continued to communicate with all graduates following the 2010 program, there were less opportunities to directly observe teacher-student interactions and pedagogical processes following the 2010 program. Instead, BMoreFit asked me to become their research coordinator to organize and conduct a

survey study to inform the future direction of the organization. In 2011, I agreed to do this because it would enable me to maintain contact with BMoreFit faculty and students, arrange meetings and events at the BAC, and ultimately extend my observations and interactions with those involved. However, prepared to more fully immerse myself in day-to-day operations in 2011, I considered the program cancellation a severe enough limitation that I briefly considered looking for an alternative empirical site. When the director asked me to coordinate the survey study, I asked that in return I would be able to solicit BMoreFit students to participate in a Photovoice project. Thus, 2011 and 2012 encompassed my balancing of two research projects under the umbrella of my dissertation fieldwork. I recruited five University of Maryland undergraduates to assist with the survey project and help me coordinate the Photovoice project with former students. Exhausting and overwhelming, it was more responsibility than I could feasibly handle. Going through a divorce and financial struggle during this time did not help either. In the midst of my ethnographic engagements with BMoreFit from late 2009 to late 2012, I consider the most significant limitations to be:

1. The cancellation of the 2011 summer training program which limited the scale and scope of my observations and required some creative maneuvering to put myself into a position to interact with BMoreFit organizers and students more frequently.
2. Difficulty negotiating access and rapport: Feeling obliged to use my credentials as a former personal trainer and kinesiology undergraduate to gain access, my ability to develop rapport with BMoreFit organizers was relatively simple but inevitably limited my access to students who perceived me as another official representative of BMoreFit.

3. By agreeing to conduct the survey study on their behalf, I became co-opted by BMoreFit and pulled into a project that I would not have otherwise approved.
4. The lack of regular and frequent contact with students following their completion of the 2010 program made it difficult to coordinate the Photovoice project: I had hoped this would provide a richer sense of students' experiences and compensate for the fact that I had trouble engaging with students outside the immediate purview of BMoreFit organizers running the program.

In retrospect, my attempts to maintain a purpose within the organization, following the decision to desist provision of fitness training to underserved youth, forced me to accept contingencies in the interest of completing this dissertation. Without agreeing to conduct the survey project, my interactions with BMoreFit organizers and students would have ceased since there would be no program activities to observe and I would have little to justify my continued presence. However, outside of extending my length of engagement with people affiliated with BMoreFit, this compromise would prove futile as it was determined by the board to re-focus their efforts on partnering with local elementary schools.

Importantly, these contingencies also led me towards autoethnography and self-reflexive writing practices to make sense of my conflicting experiences and roles within BMoreFit. As such, while I recognize the aforementioned conditions as potential limitations that constrained the scale and scope of my observational and embodied interactions with BMoreFit participants, they also opened the door to reflexively question my own embodied role, and the effectiveness of private sector interventions for the underprivileged. The fact that the program changed so rapidly from its initial formulation targeting "at-risk" youth referred by the Mayor's office for Employment Development in 2009, to the recruitment of

younger, less delinquent, and more "promising," high school students in 2010, to its current iteration of reaching elementary aged schoolchildren, reflects the relative instability and uncertainty of privatized social interventions. In this regard, I think it is important for future research investigating health disparities to question the role being played by voluntary interventions seeking to mitigate inequitable health outcomes. If such efforts largely exist at the level of pedagogical discourse, seeking to infuse particular logics of individual responsibility for health while ignoring structural impediments, they are doomed to reproduce a neoliberalized view of fitness and health that further legitimates privatization and justifies neglect for those perceived to have failed in their responsibilities to their own health (Howell & Ingham, 2001).

It is also my contention that with better circumstances, a Photovoice project with underserved youth in Baltimore city would yield tremendous insights into the experience of 21st century urban re-structuring, and how neoliberalization processes have impacted health, wealth, education, and quality of life amongst this severely underserved and neglected population (Giroux, 2009, 2012; Grossberg, 2005). In this respect, I learned that a trained team of investigators is needed to adequately coordinate such efforts. My own attempt was severely limited by the time required to conduct the survey project, and the fact that my own research team consisted of willing yet inexperienced undergraduate students. Research conducted by Wang & Burris (1997), Wang, Cash, & Powers (2000), and Wang & Redwood-Jones (2001) demonstrate the recruitment of large teams consisting of directors, coordinators, focus group facilitators, photography experts, and community members to collaboratively orchestrate a meaningful and impactful Photovoice project that is inclusive, participatory, and democratic. If more of these criteria were met, Photovoice might evince a powerful medium through which a visually based expression of performative physicalities

could be linked to the inequitable conditions of lived experience and actually existing spaces of neoliberalization (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). The axiological commitments of PCS to intervene in sites of physical cultural injustice and oppression may also be extended towards new possibilities for dialogic, participatory, and embodied inquiry that takes place on the ground, in communities, and alongside the people who are the focus of such efforts (Freire, 2000). In the interest of promoting future PCS work that seeks to directly engage with embodied physicalities at the level of everyday lived experience, the use of ethnographic methods and reflexive writing practices offer the possibility of creating embodied and lived textualities that articulate the performance of bodies as subjects within the historical and spatial contexts of their existence (Denzin, 2014; Giardina & Newman, 2011).

APPENDIX A
Methodology and Methods

Linking theory & method: Marxism and Physical Cultural Studies

> Men [sic] make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given, and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. (Marx, 1977, p. 300)
>
> In short, Marx(ism) still matters (Carrington, 2009, p. 16)

In attempting to situate the BMoreFit program within the broader contexts (political, economic, and cultural) of Baltimore City and its shifting patterns of development, (dis)investment, and governance, I realized that the program—its methods, curriculum, and its very purpose—stood as a quite unique outcome of a range of larger processes, from urban problems (crime, gangs, homelessness, poor health) and government infrastructure, to the astounding health and activity inequities between proximal neighborhoods (see the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicator Alliance website at www.bnia.org). While I did not enter the research site with any specific expectations or hypotheses (my desire fueled quite simply by the fact that the program resonated with my interests and experiences with fitness, racial/ethnic inequality, and urban space), my graduate training nonetheless led me toward a number of theoretical frameworks through which I approached this project and my interpretations of social phenomena. According to Denzin (1978), "theory is interpretation…it leads to explanation of some social phenomenon…and gives order to what is, or can be, observed" (p. 6). While avoiding the tendency to pre-determine a specific theory best suited to examine a particular empirical site or social phenomena in advance of actual fieldwork and observation, my engagement with the BMoreFit program was initially guided by a Marxist inspired, physical cultural studies approach, which, also eventually led

me toward literature on urban studies (see, for example, Gottdiener & Budd, 2005), neoliberal healthism (see, for example, Briggs & Hallin, 2007), the social problems industry (see, for example, Pitter & Andrews, 1997), qualitative public health (see, for example, Wang & Redwood-Jones, 2001), and Baltimore based studies of political economy and physical cultural inequity (see, for example, Andrews, Silk, and Pitter, 2008; Harvey, 2001). With time spent observing the BMoreFit program however, in particular the manner in which faculty and students interacted and played the "roles" demanded by the program design, it also became necessary to engage with literature pertaining to the racial and class politics of education and philanthropy, critical pedagogy, and white privilege (For example, Bonilla-Silva, 2002; Castagno, 2008; Endres & Gould, 2009; Feagin, 2013; Freire, 2000; Fusco, 2005; Giroux, 2009; Lipsitz, 2006; Pollock, 2004; Rodriguez, 2009). Thus, it is my intention here to explicate my own iteration of the Physical Cultural Studies project—specifically the Marxist-inspired theories and paradigms that provided a foundation of critical thought through which my observations and interpretations were influenced—in order to outline a theoretical framework that nonetheless remained contingent and non-guaranteed.

When making one's theoretical or axiological stance known within a particular project, I often wonder if it is always necessary to begin a discussion of one's theoretical background with a nod to deceased white men? Or, rather, according to Derrida, "must we still cite Marx as an authority in order to say 'I am not a Marxist'? (1994, p. 34). Can theorizations of the historical present ever be adequately realized without exhibiting an ontological and epistemological grounding in theorizations of the historical past? As Johnson, Chambers, Raghuram, and Tincknell (2004) note, the beauty of theory is found in its ability to enable the "seizing on a new idea, making it our own and recognizing how it changes us, too" (p. 90). In building upon, deconstructing and reconstructing (Hall, 1981),

challenging and extending the theoretical contributions of "canonical works," it must be understood that the importance of theory is found in what it enables us to do; the understandings and sensibilities it provides us to "grasp and describe the cultural complexity of issues and problems, and highlight the need to understand and acknowledge that complexity rather than ignoring or dismissing it" (p. 193). As Hall proclaims, "Had Marxism not existed, 'post-Marxism' would have had to invent it, so that 'deconstructing' it once more would give the 'deconstructionists' something further to do" (quoted in Carrington, 2009, p. 15). In this sense, Marx(ism) has provided a strong framework from which to challenge, extend, and reformulate theorizations of modernity, political economy, and class; subsequently (and concomitantly) moving into the contemporary moment of late capitalism, post-modernity, and identity politics.

For the purposes of explicating a theoretical framework, this section expounds upon what might be more appropriately called an Archimedean point from which my ontological, epistemological, and axiological proclivities emerged and guided the manner in which I carried out this dissertation project. I begin by outlining my own engagement with Marx(ism) and how the work of Gramsci, Bourdieu, Williams, Hall, Lefebvre, and some contemporary (Marxist) theorists (Jameson and Zizek) have influenced my understanding and extended the possibilities of a Marxist-inspired Physical Cultural Studies. I will also seek to reconnect these theorists back to Marx(ism), Marxian politics in the 21st century, and critical cultural politics and pedagogy throughout, concluding with a discussion of how my own PCS praxis took shape in relation to my work with BMoreFit.

Within the Marxian oeuvre, I think it necessary to engage the historical dialectic materialism through which the productive forces of society can be linked dialectically to social institutions and the consciousness of people within the society itself (Mitchell, 1998).

Thus, a materialist ontology views the nature of individuals, and society as a whole, as dependent upon the material conditions that shape their lives; the mode of production—wherein individuals express their life as integral to how and what they produce—being just one element (albeit a major one in societies prior to advanced Western capitalism) in a totality of material relations (Barker, 2000; Mitchell, 1998). Blending Hegel's dialectic idealism and Feuerbach's natural materialism, Marx's concept of a historical, dialectic materialism offers an explanatory framework through which material conditions are shown to influence ideals, consciousness, and social relations within a particular historical moment. While this may suggest a reduction of all superstructural elements to the economic base in a manner that reduces, for example, culture and politics to economic forces, a true dialectic materialism suggests that economy and culture, like the individual situated within a socio-historical context, both constitute, and are constituted by, the broader social structure in which they are located—Marx himself acknowledging this relation and the importance of history which suggests how agentic potentialities help shape external structures (Lefebvre, 2009 [1968]). In this sense, and despite the misappropriations of Marxist thought that irrationally (and ironically) reduce all of Marx's political economy to a deterministic economism, Williams (1983 [1958]) suggests that the base/superstructure formula should not be oversimplified as a literal concept. Within the context of late capitalism then (Jameson, 1991), cultural, social, and political trajectories and relations of power can certainly be theorized as being the product and producer of the economic as a defining feature of contemporary life (Harvey, 1989).

Marxist dialectics enable conceptualizations of social life to be unapologetically materialist; not in the sense of materiality determining particular outcomes, but in the sense that the landscapes of political, ideological, and cultural interactions are rarely, if ever,

entirely removed from the material forces, which help to constitute them. More specifically, Lefebvre's (2009 [1968]) explication of this point is perhaps appropriate:

> As currently interpreted, dialectical materialism looks on ideas, institutions and cultures – on consciousness – as a frivolous and unimportant superstructure above an economic substance, which alone is solid. *True materialism* is quite different; it determines the practical relations inherent in every organized human existence and studies them inasmuch as they are concrete conditions of existence for cultures or ways of life…*dialectical materialism is not an economicism* (p. 73, emphasis added).

Stemming from the critique's of Hegel's abstractionism and Feuerbach's oversimplifications, Lefebvre posits that Marx and Engels' not only reunited idealism and materialism but transformed and transcended it into what can be considered the theory-method of historical dialectic materialism; the dialectic method (abstracted thought concerning the relations of individuals and society) being fused with the ontological theorization of a contextually-grounded historical materialism (Lefebvre, 2009 [1968]). In an Althusserian sense, the dialectic pointed toward the multiple determinations overlapping and intersecting; its affectivity being dependent upon a particular moment. Or, "the patterns of multiple interactions and reciprocal causations among the different 'levels' in a social formation" (Brantlinger, 1990, p. 86), being—contra Althusser's determination in the "last instance"—conjuncturally and contextually specific (Hall, 1985). It is here that the contributions of Antonio Gramsci need be explicated in as much as his work provided the crucial bridge enabling the synthesis of structural Marxism and cultural humanism, and the eventual development of cultural studies' contingent Marxist theory/politics; its non-determinateness, radical contextualism, and theory method of articulation (Grossberg, 1997a; 1997b; Hall, 1996).

Gramsci extended the mechanisms of structuring power into the cultural sphere where agents are encouraged to accept their own oppression through the dispersed, common sense

logics (doxa) of civil society (education, religion, the state, the family, etc.). Or, following Williams (1977), power and power relations are more about the successful accommodation of opposition than the suppression of it. Thus, the concept of hegemony emerges from Gramsci's grounding in historical dialectic materialism and his notion of culture as a "contested terrain" wherein superstructural elements became ever more important sites for analysis; challenging economic determination by positing the role of power, force and consent in the institutions of civil society (Giulianotti, 2005a; Rowe, 2004). The primacy of material and historical conditions within Gramsci's work remains key here as the forces of containment and resistance, despite being carried out more on the ideological terrains of culture (the necessity of force becoming less pronounced within advanced societies), are rooted in the material conditions and relations from which opposition becomes realized and enacted. It is here that a Marxian understanding of Gramsci is appropriate to extend the boundaries of cultural analysis while acknowledging the historical/dialectic materialism that can connect, without determining even in "the last instance", elements of the base/superstructure (Rowe, 2004) and perhaps move us toward a more committed political engagement with the material realities of physical cultural injustice. In particular, Hall's *Notes on Deconstructing 'the Popular'* problematized the very concepts of 'culture' and the 'popular' as the sites through which historical relations, traditions, and practices have been struggled over and reconstituted:

> Struggle and resistance – but also, of course, appropriation and ex-propriation. Time and again, what we are really looking at is the active destruction of particular ways of life, and their transformation into something new. 'Cultural change' is a polite euphemism for the process by which some cultural forms and practices are driven out of the centre of popular life, actively marginalized. Rather than simply 'falling into disuse' through the Long March to modernization, things are actively pushed aside, so that something else can take their place (Hall, 1981, pp. 227-228)

In an exceptionally cogent discussion of the "field of culture as a sort of constant battlefield" (p. 233), Hall signals the necessity of synthesizing the two paradigms in order to avoid the pessimistic assumptions of mass cultural dupes and false consciousness, and the essentialist romanticism of cultural resistance. As the field of culture is constantly evolving and impossible to comprehensively map in its entirety, Hall suggests that the question to ask is not what is or is not culture, but rather what distinctions, tensions, and oppositions arise between, and in relation to, the dominant culture and that of the periphery (Hall, 1981; 1986a). Such a conception of popular culture is critical for any (physical) cultural studies analysis because it rightfully draws power, politics, and meaning into the seemingly innocuous realm of the popular, and does so in a manner that acknowledges the contingency and non-determined state of cultural relations (Hall, 1996).

As Bennet (2009 [1986]) explains, "the part played by the most taken for granted, sedimented cultural aspects of everyday life are crucially implicated in the processes whereby hegemony is fought for, won, lost, resisted – the field of popular culture is structured by the attempt of the ruling class to win hegemony and by the forms of opposition to this endeavor" (p. 85). Stemming from Marxist dialectic ontology, Gramsci's thoughts on the State for example, wherein political consent is requested but also inculcated through the education of the masses, indicates the ubiquitous field of power relations operating in a continual flux of consenting and oppositional cultural politics (Gramsci, 2009 [1971]). Initially applied to class struggles, the processes of winning consent could be understood through the articulations of a particular class grouping to the culture and ideologies which express and give it meaning (Bennet, 2009 [1986]). In this sense, the establishment and maintenance of dominant positions of power is reliant upon the continual winning of consent that, while certainly impacted in no small measure by economic determinations and

political position, must be won on the contested terrain of popular culture (Hall, 1996). In particular, it is the conjuncturally specific articulations of meaning that forge and reproduce not only class divisions, but race, gender, age, sexuality, ability, and so forth. As a politically minded intellectual project, cultural studies engages forms of popular culture precisely because it is also the site in which such articulations might be disrupted and re-articulated to engender progressive social change. This is perhaps why Hall (1981) so ardently proclaimed that "popular culture is one of the sites where this struggle for and against the powerful is engaged…it is the arena of consent and resistance. It is partly where hegemony arises, and where it is secured…that is why popular culture matters. Otherwise, to tell you the truth, I don't give a damn about it" (p. 239). Within Hall's comments here, there is the implicit reassertion of a modernist realism or rather, a dialectic materialism, through which his work continuously seeks to move us [cultural studies; society in general] toward something better; the "rather unpopular business of deconstruction and reconstruction" being a key aspect of his Marxist ontological underpinnings. In this regard, Hall quite explicitly lays out his position as a post-Marxist:

> I am a "post-Marxist" only in the sense that I recognize the necessity to move beyond orthodox Marxism, beyond the notion of Marxism guaranteed by the laws of history. But I still operate somewhere within what I understand to be the discursive limits of a Marxist position....So "post" means, for me, going on thinking on the ground of a set of established problems, a problematic. It doesn't mean deserting that terrain but rather, using it as one's reference point. So I am, only in that sense, a post-Marxist and a post-structuralist, because those are the two discourses I feel most constantly engaged with. They are central to my formation and I don't believe in the endless, trendy recycling [sic] of one fashionable theorist after another, as if you can wear new theories like T- shirts (Hall, 1996, pp. 148-149)

Of critical importance here is Hall's enunciation of a Marxist ontology through the identification of "a set of established problems, a problematic" through which a range of theoretical and methodological frameworks might be contingently applied given the

empirical context. This is precisely where a "Marxism without guarantees" (Hall, 1996) becomes critical in as much as my work strives for a non-determined and non-guaranteed specificity. In this sense, Hall's (1988; see also 1986b) suggestion that he is in the "unpopular business of deconstruction and reconstruction" also reflects the imperative of (physical) cultural studies to acknowledge the uneasy relationship with its Marxist underpinnings without denying the theory of dialectic materialism to contextualize economic and cultural relations. While some scholars like Angela McRobbie (1994) suggest that a return to the sort of Marxist theorizing advanced by Jameson (1991) and Harvey (1989) will re-privilege and prioritize economic concerns over cultural or political ones, she too called for a more materialist analysis of forms of culture and the relations of subjectivity and materiality.

In this vein, and with reference to sport and physical culture, Andrews and Giardina (2008) signal the emergence of a 'performative cultural studies' in which a "politically motivated, contextually relevant, and performatively rendered cultural studies…interrogates the historical present…to produce the type of knowledge through which it would be in a position to intervene into the (broader social) world and *make a difference*" (p. 408, italics in original). At its core, such an approach to the study of sport and physical culture rightly considers the specificities and interrelationships of a particular conjuncture, engages the radically contextualist theory of articulation, and places social justice and the implications of cultural politics at the forefront of its mode of analysis (Grossberg, 1997a, 2006). The actual mobilization of a contextual cultural studies requires the recognition that, according to Andrews (2002), "sport forms (practices, products, institutions, etc.) can only be understood by the way that they are articulated into a particular set of complex social, economic, political, and technological relationships that compose the social context" (p. 114). In other

words, a 'sport without guarantees' declares that there are no necessary correspondences within the complex set of articulations making up the (physical cultural) social context; such forces are never fully determined but rather constituted and constitutive of a particular historical conjuncture (Andrews, 2002; Grossberg, 2006). Out of this shift toward a (Marxist) physical cultural studies' that matters (and is never guaranteed in advance), the body, physicality, and sporting practice represents the empirical core through which an interventionist and politically minded intellectual project might be realized. Such a conception advances the tenants of a Marxist ontology and axiology without the determinacy of the economic.

In as much as my observations and interpretations utilized Bourdieuian theorizing to understand the class cultures of participants, particularly those cultural intermediaries involved in the fitness industry, some explication is required here. With respect to Bourdieu's most notable scholarship, *Distinction* (1984), and the conceptualization of cultural field, habitus, and capitals, the significance of his work on the class politics and cultural logics of sporting practices and forms has been tremendous (Bourdieu, 1978; 1988; Giulianotti, 2005b). Bourdieu's triumvarate of field, habitus, and capital can be described as a theorization of class-based lifestyles in which the body plays a crucial role as both a product and producer of class culture, status, and differentiation (Bourdieu, 1977; Schilling, 1993). Representing a sort of contingently based theorization of the social structure, the 'field' can be defined as "a series of institutions, rules, conventions, categories, designations, appointments and titles which constitute an objective hierarchy, and which produce an authorize certain discourses and activities" (Webb, Schirato, & Danaher, 2002, pp. 21-22). The connection here to Gramsci's reformulated Marxism, within the hegemony concept in particular, is evident in as much as the determinations of the social totality are dispersed

beyond Marx's mode of production. While not exhibiting the sort of fluidity of power posited by Foucault, Bourdieu's concept of the cultural field is always dynamic and in flux. Working beyond the sort of structuralist objectivism that "sets out to establish objective regularities (structures, laws, systems of relationships, etc.) independent of individual consciousness and wills…" (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 26), Bourdieu extends the rigidity of Marx(ism) to account for human agency, experience, and contingent social formations. Thus, the idea of capitals (economic, cultural, social, physical) and habitus are contingently interrelated and dependent upon the field in which forms of capital and the expression of a class-based habitus is expressed (Bourdieu, 1977; 1986).

The idea of capital is itself complex; as Harker, Mahar, and Wilkes (1990) suggest, the "definition of capital is very wide for Bourdieu and includes material things (which can have symbolic value), as well as 'untouchable' but culturally significant attributes such as prestige, status and authority (referred to as symbolic capital), along with cultural capital (defined as culturally-valued taste and consumption patterns)…(p. 1). Subsequently, the habitus "is constituted in practice and is always oriented toward practical functions" from which, forms of capital are shaped and help to continuously re-shape the habitus (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 52). In other words, and again demonstrating the move beyond an economic reductionism, Newman and Falcous (in progress) iterate:

> habitus is not solely the material activity of acting out functions of 'installed' economic predilections, nor the ideological formation of social field functionality. Rather, habitus is materially produced predispositions toward social action and the exchange of capital, which both shape the fields of social movement and are shaped by it (p. 23)

Through Bourdieu's considered reflection on the mutually constitutive nature of these concepts, a dialectical materialism can be inferred in two ways: first between theory and the empirical in as much as Bourdieu clearly developed an intellectual praxis, and second

between lived experience and the social structure wherein a habitus—influenced by the access and development of capitals—forms in relation to the field in which one is located (Bourdieu, 1977; 1986). Furthermore, it might also be considered the extent to which Bourdieu's theorizing can be synthesized with the conjuncturalist and radical contextualist project of a Marxism without guarantees within cultural studies (Hall, 1983; 1996). In discussing the various forms and conversion processes of capitals, Bourdieu notes that, "the structure of the distribution of the different types and subtypes of capital at a given moment in time represents the immanent structure of the social world" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 242). Running throughout the ontological sensibilities of Marxism—positing labor relations and the mode of production as historically constituted and constitutive—is the need to "always historicize" (Jameson, 1991) and locate the conditions and relations of a social totality within a particular historical conjuncture. The historicism and contextual fluidity of Bourdieu's theorizing thus lends itself toward the analysis of a range of cultural, social, economic, political, and technological phenomena that, in Hall's terms (1996), is never guaranteed in advance but emerges from the interrelatedness of forces and structures within a social totality; sport being a key site through which such practices and institutions might be engaged (Andrews & Giardina, 2008; Hall, 1996).

Further denoting the potential of Bourdieuian theorizing to be extended beyond class concerns and the embodied nature of class-based lifestyles, (sport) scholars have employed the concept of habitus in particular to examine gender (Mennesson, 2000; Swanson, 2009), race and ethnicity (Back, Crabbe, & Solomos, 2001; Wacquant, 1992; 1995), and its intersections within education (Byrne, 2009). With respect to the latter, Bourdieu has provided a framework through which to "operationalize notions like field and habitus on multiple axes" of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and so forth (Byrne, 2009, p. 433). Thus,

it becomes possible to speak to the non-necessary, yet actual, articulations of race and class that cannot be ignored in any analysis of material relations and lived experience. In this sense, Byrne (2009) proposes the need to avoid reproducing a hierarchy in which social class trumps other subjectivities (race, ethnicity, sexuality, gender, and so forth) that could be articulated to the development of cultural and social capital as the means through which distinction is secured and maintained. In other words, she suggests that a subject of analysis should be white, middle-classness in which being white should be seen "as a cultural resource that white parents unwittingly draw on in their school negotiations…Technically speaking, in this field, being white becomes a type of cultural capital' (p. 433). However, given the tendency of Bourdieu's work to "reduce symbolic relations to pre-given social relations" (p. 434) the relative fixity of social identities within the concept of habitus alone may not offer a flexible enough category through which to acknowledge the complex multiple interrelations of race, class, gender, and sexuality. Nevertheless, within cultural studies of sport, theorizations of class have become increasingly fused with race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, age, and ability in a manner that demonstrates the potential diversification and contextual, conjunctural specificity of analyzing sport and physical culture (Cole, 1993; McDonald & Birrell, 1999).

Marxist theory, empiricism, and praxis

Within this theoretical overview, my explication of historical dialectic materialism, Marxist politics, and a physical cultural Marxism "without guarantees" (Hall, 1983; 1996)—spanning a range of key theorists (Marx, Gramsci, Williams, Hall, Bourdieu, Lefebvre, Jameson) that have significantly impacted my scholarship and are themselves indebted to Marx (albeit in different ways)—should have also demonstrated an inherent critical pedagogy

that continually seeks to intervene in sites of social and (physical) cultural injustice. In terms of the work I did with BMoreFit, it was the material conditions and experiences of everyday life that I was most sensitive to (partly due to my own lived experiences)—the manner in which racial difference is experienced, reproduced, and represented in relation to material structures—and which I interpreted as being key factors in the diffuse perpetuation of race-based inequalities and xenophobic, neoliberal agendas impacting heath and fitness disparities. From the material and socio-spatial inequities existing within the urban core as a result of de-industrializing processes, to the paternalistic and territorializing efforts of quasi-social programs in the effort to "civilize" youth of color, defined as "at-risk" and increasingly targeted by the machineries of neoliberal governance (Giroux, 2004; 2006), the issues I am most passionate about and seek to engage stem from, and relate to, the processes, forces, and structures through which race and class are intertwined and experienced materially. This is where Carrington (2001), Hall (1996), and Gilroy (1991) in particular have been helpful in refining my theoretical and epistemological position relative to the study of class and race. While all speaking in reference to post-war Britain and the emergence of a "new racism" through the New Right's articulation of nationalism, xenophobia, and patriotism as an essentially raced rhetoric of inclusion and exclusion, they locate such ideologies and consciousness within the material changes, policies, and social relations that shaped popular conceptions concerning race, immigration, and the constitution of "one nation." Although Gilroy (1991) critiques Benedict Anderson's 'Imagined Communities' (1983) for suggesting that race and nationalism are antithetical in the process of defining the nation, Anderson puts forth a historical materialist conception of race, and forms of racism, in the sense that they emerge from class concerns, rather than those of the nation (an internal rather than an external struggle). Further, I interpret this argument as demonstrating the impact of history

(imperialism, colonialism, segregation, racism, etc.) within a materialist framework that encounters racial inequality in the form of unequal access and opportunity, to engage social institutions (education, housing, employment, health care, etc.) that have structured the terrain upon which, contemporary society perpetuates its racial/ethnic and class-based hierarchies and bifurcations.

Understanding and intervening in sites, practices, discourses, and ideologies that perpetuate this raced and classed hierarchy requires a theory and method suited to engage the materiality of such relations within a fragmented and depoliticized, conjunctural moment of the *posts*. To this degree, the contingent and contextually specific nature of cultural studies theory and practice enable my own theoretical, methodological, and axiological underpinnings to be guided by the material realities of the empirical sites I seek to examine and engage. Just as Hall suggests that "the only theory worth having is that which you have to fight off, not that which you speak with profound fluency" (1992, p. 280), my engagement with Marxism and historical/dialectic materialism reflects an ontological sensibility rather than a specific theory through which I am seeking to interpret the entirety of the social world (i.e. uncritically applying theory in advance to explain everything). As Zizek (2009) notes, "Marxism is not the all-encompassing interpretive horizon, but the matrix which enables us to account for (to generate) the multiplicity of narratives and/or interpretations (p. 191). Thus, while I occasionally have to "fight off" the pessimistic urges to interpret social phenomena in a more structurally deterministic fashion, I am always drawn back to thinking through the materiality of social relations and experiences, and how categories of class, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality are dialectically linked within the structures, processes, and forces of late capitalism.

At this juncture, and returning to Hall's "Marxism without guarantees" (1996), it is a physical cultural studies without guarantees (Andrews & Giardina, 2008; Carrington, 2009) to which I aspire, in order to locate physical cultural practices, institutions, and experiences within particular social formations of a specific historical conjuncture; there being no necessary correspondence or non-correspondence between them (Hall, 1985). Following Grossberg (1992; 1997a) in particular, it is cultural studies' "conjuncturalism" and the theory and method of articulation that extends Marx's historical/dialectic materialism to "always historicize" (Jameson, 1991) and contextualize cultural practices within a particular moment and the various contextual relations that help to constitute it (Slack, 1995). The manner in which I apply these theoretical and methodological tools is also "radically contextualist" (Grossberg, 1997a) in the sense that my empiricism is driven more by my politics than by my academic training. Although the two are actually quite inseparable within cultural studies itself—the very impetus and historical framework of the (trans)discipline being founded upon the political commitments of the New Left in post-war Britain (Storey, 1996; Carrington, 2009)—I am strongly in support of empirical focus being connected to political commitment in as much as forms of analysis are not pre-determined or guaranteed in advance. With regard to my engagement with the BMoreFit program, I was motivated by a political commitment to engage in a site of cultural politics—the "constant battlefield" (Hall, 1981) of culture, meaning, and power—wherein class and race/ethnic differences were pronounced, and highly contested, within a context of health and fitness philanthropy. However, I constantly wrestled with my own conceptualizations of the materiality of race within my empirical site because I interpreted the broad impact of BMoreFit as being both 1. Complicit in the advancement of neoliberal healthism as a guiding logic through pedagogical means, and 2. At least moderately empowering to a few students who used it as a means to

something better (personal health and fitness as well as employment opportunities). Thus, situating BMoreFit within the broader context of neoliberal urban governance and the 'moment' in which it is located, while more explicitly articulating the lived experiences of program participants within it, is precisely what an historical dialectic materialism enabled me to think through and develop as a form of analysis.

Thus, in extending the burgeoning Physical Cultural Studies project, I would assert that the previous discussion of my ontological, theoretical, methodological, and axiological positions seek to intervene in physical cultural injustices in a meaningful way; avoiding the tendency to reduce them to the economic but rather, by employing cultural studies theories and methods (conjuncturalism, articulation, radical contextualism, ethnography, textual analysis), locating such issues within a complex field of relations that can never be guaranteed or determined in advance. In this sense, critical pedagogy—that which encompasses, yet goes beyond, the traditional sense of education and learning (Giroux, 2006)—is, in my opinion, inherent to the project and purpose of a Marxist Physical Cultural Studies; the theoretical trajectories of the aforementioned scholars being, in no small measure, foundational for my theoretical understanding and engaged praxis. As I continue to move through Marx, so to speak, encountering and engaging new theories and methods to engage various empirical contexts, the foundations of a historical dialectic materialism, committed politics and critical pedagogy, and a 'Marxism without guarantees' will continue to guide my interpretations and analyses. Theory then, the manner in which it is deployed—to let one "off the hook" by carefully applying it in advance (Grossberg, 1992), or selectively appropriating it in a technical fashion (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000)—and how it is understood, only matters, and is useful, when it enables us to do something; to move towards something better (Bourdieu, 1977; Duncombe, 2006; Grossberg, 1992; Lefebvre, 2003).

Outlining a self-reflexive methodological approach

While I am theoretically inclined to think more abstractly in terms of structural conditions—the materiality of social life via a Marxist dialectic materialism, and socio-spatial contextualization though cultural studies emphasis on articulation, conjuncturalism, and radical contextualism (Grossberg, 1997b; Slack, 1997; Johnson et al, 2004)—I also believe it is necessary to engage directly with lived experience to more fully understand relations of power within any site of (physical) cultural analysis. As such, the issues and empirical sites I have been involved in are reflective of my axiological and theoretical positions, through which, I have sought to have a positive impact. Such proclivities are made salient in my adherence to a moral-sacred epistemology that, "values human life without exception; is political; and stresses a feminist, communitarian moral ethic centered on empowerment, human dignity, nonviolence, shared governance, solidarity, and civic transformation" (Amis & Silk, 2008, p. 11). My concerns for human welfare, equality, opportunity, and democracy thereby influence my outlook and leave an indelible imprint upon the research process—identifying issues, theorizing the research design and questions, deciding whom to interview, how they are represented in writing, analyzing data, and drawing conclusions (Adler & Jermier, 2005)—according to my epistemological, ideological, and political standpoint (Jermier, 1998). In other words, such an epistemological position in qualitative research requires self-reflexivity: openly expressing and acknowledging the influence of the researcher rather than claiming an impossible objectivity by performing "the God trick" and taking on a view f**rom** nowhere (Harding, 2004).

Furthermore, and following Denzin & Lincoln's clarification on the link between intellectual commitment and the radical politics of qualitative research, my approach in this project was underpinned by the belief that "a politics of liberation must always begin with

the perspectives, desires, and dreams of those individuals and groups who have been oppressed by the larger ideological, economic, and political forces of a society, or a historical moment" (1994, p. 575). Having been privy to the experiences of race and class-based injustice and inequality directed at, and felt by, my closest peers growing up, of which I was able to more easily negotiate due to my subjectivity as a white male (see prologue and chapter 4 for a fuller explication of self-reflexivity and ethnographic engagement), I am particularly driven to utilize my privilege (racial, gendered, sexual, educational, and professional) to fight for those disadvantaged by the reproduction of social hierarchies and power relations in contemporary Western society. Thus, my concern for social justice is quite literally the raison d'être of all my academic pursuits; it has provided the purpose, and sustained my pursuit, of higher education when I felt overwhelmed and ready to give up. While I never expected this project to dramatically alter the divisive and unequal landscape of Baltimore City, I was in fact hopeful for the potential impact it could have for improving the parameters through which BMoreFit engages underprivileged groups (opening up dialogue, providing new ways of thinking, and drawing attention to the varied perspectives and lived experiences of those involved), and how their work influences broader constituencies leading to public policy. Alas, this hope would not come to fruition after BMoreFit altered its focus and, rather than continue their direct engagement with young people, dedicated its resources to the development of a training manual for physical education instruction that could be distributed to public school teachers (a truly "hands-off" approach to philanthropic intervention).

Methodologically, it is important to understand that the research approach that was employed here refused to be predetermined with regard to formulating hypotheses, specific research questions, measurement instruments, and various forms of rigid analytical

procedures. Instead, and following Crotty (1998) and Denzin & Lincoln (2000, 2005), the project employed the concept of the "bricoleur" in which the researcher draws upon whatever interpretive paradigms, tools and methods, and theoretical frameworks are most appropriate and useful within a particular context. This does not imply a haphazard and relativistic approach to methodology as being undisciplined and lacking rigor however. While attempting to carry out the role of the bricoleur by drawing upon a multiplicity of research methods, observational and interpreting techniques, and theories to guide the representation of observable social phenomena (see Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; 2005), it is accepted that such methods involve a precarious and laborious process of data collection and interpretation. As noted by Amis and Silk (2005):

> …though bricolage can avoid the parochialism of a unitary approach, we might well open ourselves to the superficiality of methodological breadth in which scholars, researchers, and students fail to devote sufficient time to understanding the disciplinary fields and knowledge bases from which particular modes of research emanate. Inhabiting the world of the bricoleur is far from an easy option; it requires knowledge—if not deep comprehension—of multiple worlds, methodological approaches, theoretical perspectives, and disciplinary assumptions (p. 361).

Despite the inherent difficulty and challenge of this methodological approach, I think it is closely aligned with cultural studies' emphasis on non-determinateness, anti-essentialism, anti(trans)-disciplinarity, and a self-reflexive inventory of what method and theory is most useful for an analysis of a particular empirical site and context (Frow & Morris, 2000; King, 2005). In this sense, the bricoleur does not impose a particular theory or method in advance (although both theory and method are likely to influence even the decision of the researcher to engage with a particular site) to measure, predict, or examine social phenomena according to a pre-determined analytical framework a la quantitative statistical measures claiming an unbiased objectivism (Patton, 1990). Further, as Caughey (2006) suggests, the ethnographer should not enter a research site with a particular methodological and interpretive toolkit in

hand to address what the researcher expects and is looking for, but rather "identify the focus [and appropriate toolkit] of the research in the course of your fieldwork" (p. 30). As such, evaluation of the appropriateness of the methods employed in this study should be based upon how I was able to encounter, and make knowable and meaningful, the emergence of social phenomena discussed herein, without imposing a rigid methodological structure in advance (Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Shokeid, 1997). Importantly, my purpose was not to measure indefinitely the outcomes of the program but rather to provide an in depth, qualitative snapshot that engaged the lived experiences of those involved, and how such meanings are linked to the broader processes and social conditions of metropolitan Baltimore.

Fundamentally then, the question of when, where, how, and why to use a particular theory or method is rooted in the ontological, epistemological, and axiological assumptions of the researcher. While a (post)positivist epistemology follows the general assumption that truth, even multiple truths, are 'out there' waiting to be uncovered through the predictive modeling, experimentation, and purported objectivity of the scientific method (Denzin, 1989), a constructivist epistemology asserts that there is no universal or definitive truth, but rather partial and subjective accounts of truth, through which an interpretive, subjective, and experiential methodology can, with rich texture and nuanced detail, capture an account of particular aspects of the complexity of social life (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; 2005; Patton, 1990). Following Zizek's (1994) analogy between Einstein's theory of relativity and Claude Levi-Strauss's structural approach, the expressed differences in spatial (ideological, cultural, and material) perceptions between individuals from varying backgrounds (sub-groups of South American Aboriginals in the case of Levi-Strauss's *Structural Anthropology*) does not deny objective reality, but rather, is representative of individuals' ideological imaginary, and

thereby real, relation to the conditions of their existence. In other words, "this is what Lacan has in mind when he claims that distortion and/or dissimulation is in itself revealing: what emerges via distortions of the accurate representation of reality is the real – that is, the trauma around which social reality is structured" (p. 26). With regard to BMoreFit, it was the differential experiences and understandings of health and fitness—those privileged by the discursive and material relations of 'exercise culture' and those who are typically cut off from such opportunities and/or stigmatized by them—that I sought to illuminate within the material, cultural, and ideological contexts of Baltimore city and BMoreFit.

Stemming from Grossberg (1997b), this study followed the "radical contextualism" of cultural studies in the attempt to "use the best intellectual resources available to gain a better understanding of the relations of power (as the state of play or balance in a field of forces) in a particular context, believing that such knowledge will better enable people to change the context and hence the relations of power" (p. 253). In other words, in order to most effectively examine lived experience and the social context within BMoreFit, the methodologies and theoretical frameworks employed during the course of the study did in fact change based upon the context and contingencies of the empirical (Grossberg, 1997b; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). For example, while I began as a more detached observer, watching, listening, and noting details about the empirical context and interactions that occurred within it, the more I showed up to the BAC and interacted with people, the more opportunity I had to become an embodied participant (Newman & Giardina, 2011), whereby I was constantly interacting with others, and involved in doing whatever everyone else was doing (i.e., performing certain exercises or engaging in group discussions, etc.) rather than just observing. As such, I came to realize that my own actions and presence, my embodied performances, were also helping to constitute the very nature of observable phenomena that

I was studying. Or, to paraphrase Giardina and Newman (2011), I was not just studying the movement and actions of bodies within the BAC and the BMoreFit program, but was "implicated in and cocreating the spaces of physical culture" that I would be representing through the writing of my dissertation (p. 8). In other words, I had to reconsider how my own embodied self, "produces the very cultural physicalities" (p. 8) that I was experiencing on a daily basis when involved with others in the research site. As such, my engagement with BMoreFit became more of a close ethnographic examination of the Director, faculty, students, and other key figures (BMoreFit Board of Directors; BCRP officials; Recreation Center Staff; community members visiting both the BAC and Recreation centers) while constantly appraising my own movements, actions, and speech in relation to others (Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Wolcott, 2008). Specifics about carrying out my methods of inquiry comprise the remainder of this chapter.

Participant observation

In terms of participant observation, I followed Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (2001) and Wolcott (2008) in their discussion of participant observation (or 'experiencing' in Wolcott's terms) and the process of taking field notes as a complex, reflexive, and fluid process that continuously questions ideas of representation. In other words, engaging and 'experiencing' bodies within the BAC empirical site, and in my visits to Baltimore Recreation centers, involved a process of note taking that was not only comprised of my direct observations of human interaction, but also analytic and theoretically informed musings that influenced how I was attempting to "make sense of" what was happening in the field (Emerson, et al, 2001). Thus, in my observations of BMoreFit, my note taking involved both the objective descriptions of what was physically happening around me, as well as my immediate thoughts

and interpretations of the social interactions occurring, what theories were influencing my interpretations and why, and ideas or themes that I would like to explore further through the process of "enquiring" with participants (Walcott, 2008). More specifically, I took careful notes that, in the course of experiencing and writing them down, would be categorized into either A) direct observations of events, actions, discourses, interactions, and programmatic structure; or B) my own interpretations of such phenomena and/or the social "scene" and how they are influenced by or interconnected with theory, epistemology, and self-reflexive cognition (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Wolcott, 2008).

Although BMoreFit faculty and students knew I was conducting "research" for my dissertation, and that this work involved learning about them and their participation in the program, I tried to be very conscious and careful about how I appeared to be doing this. In other words, I tried very hard to be discrete about taking notes, and almost never wrote anything down in front of anyone, unless the situation permitted (i.e., during instructional sessions where students were encouraged to take notes and I could blend in as if I too were just "taking notes," and presumably about the lesson content). Importantly, many of the comments and conversations that I have represented in the empirical chapters were initially recorded in my field notes. Short exchanges and interactions between students and faculty, for example, yielded very significant and meaningful sets of data that I would gradually form into emergent themes as I sought to interpret their meaning and significance. For example, when faculty would make statements about the importance of eating healthy, it would frequently be accompanied by references to specific types of food and how they affect body shape or composition (i.e., "if you want to lose fat weight, you need to eat less of…," or, "if you want to gain more muscle, you need to eat more of…"). With this being a frequent topic of discussion, I began interpreting these messages, given their context and the

positionalities of faculty, as particular pedagogies of health that inevitably reflected a dominant white, middle-class concern and preoccupation with using exercise and diet as the means through which to alter body shape and size, and pursue lifestyles of healthy living and longevity. In short, my observations as an active participant formed a critical source of data, and led to the development of emergent analytical themes, which, within each chapter, are represented through topic sub headings.

Qualitative interviewing

Concomitant to regular participant observation and interpretive note taking, I took every opportunity to speak with people in an attempt to understand their perspectives, values, and experiences with regard to BMoreFit, Baltimore city, "fitness" philanthropy, and/or issues related to health disparities in general. My purpose in doing so was to hopefully capture a glimpse of lived experience, particularly in terms of how different groups of people interpret and think about health and fitness, and the role of various agencies seeking to improve health for disadvantaged communities. However, this endeavor did not reflect a smooth, organized, and technical approach to qualitative interviewing. Rather, and reflective of my own, increasingly post-structural, epistemological position with regard to "knowing" and "representing" or, writing into existence, the experiences of others, my engagement with qualitative interviewing was haphazard, messy, and opportunistic (King, 2005; Richardson, 2000; Slack, 1996). Previous experiences with qualitative interviewing, under the tutelage of Dr. John Amis during my Master's thesis project, involved more standardized procedures, explicit protocols, and predetermined questions and/or themes to discuss with participants (see, for example, Amis, 2005). These interviews were scheduled in advance, and followed very formalized measures that "fit" within the context of my

empirical site (upper and middle level managers and event staff within FedEx Forum in Memphis, TN). Conversely, my approach to interviewing participants involved in BMoreFit was more naturalistic and organic; I did not contact potential "interviewees" ahead of time to schedule them for a formal interview; did not construct an interview guide for each individual (except for the generalized "sample" question guide I was forced to develop to satisfy the IRB), and did not abscond to a "quiet" secluded space to conduct formal interviews with participants. Instead, I sought to become immersed within the natural rhythms and daily routines of the program and its participants, such that I would not need to "probe" for answers, but that in my organic everyday interactions with others, I would eventually learn about the people involved in the program and gain enough understanding from different sources to make sense of what was going on.

Quite simply, given the nature of my empirical site, the kinds of meaningful knowledge and understanding I was seeking from participants, and my own axiological commitments to "take sides" and work alongside (St. Pierre, 2011), those I sought to understand and help through my inquiring efforts (Wolcott, 2008), I wanted to minimize the affect of power imbalances inherent to social research (Cannella & Lincoln, 2011; Christians, 2011). In other words, I wanted to speak *with* people, and in a manner that did not predetermine roles (researcher/researched, interviewer/interviewee, etc.), and potentially limit meaningful exchange, but that would enable open dialogic conversations and the co-construction of knowledge and understanding (Giardina & Newman, 2011; etc.). Thus, out of 53 total interviews conducted, only 15 could be considered "formal" interviews that entailed sitting down with another person in private, debriefing them as to the purpose of the interview, and tape recording the entire conversation. Further, and as previously intimated, these interviews still took place "in the moment," meaning that they were not scheduled in

advance, but emerged through informal conversations that eventually led to my asking if we could do a recorded interview right then and there. As I will soon explain, most of these interviews occurred early on in my fieldwork. The remaining 38 interviews involved informal conversations that also happened "in the moment," but were not tape-recorded. For a number of reasons (time constraints, willingness of the participant, immediate environment, quality of the informal conversation) these informal conversations did not evolve toward the stage of asking for a "formal" interview. In these instances however, the person(s) with whom I would be speaking with, were well aware that I was conducting research and did not mind me jotting down notes about the things they said.

Furthermore, and largely contributing to my eventual decision to take a less formal route to speaking with participants (i.e., interviewing them), I found this "style" of inquiry to be more effective than formal interviewing because participants were more relaxed and willing to discuss how they really felt. As hard as I tried to develop this level of comfortability in a setting that involved some privacy, a tape recorder, and the formality of me asking particular questions, I found that respondents were either more nervous (lending to an awkward and uneven conversation) or seemed to speak more calculated and carefully about certain topics. As such, and as table 1 below shows, informal questioning became the dominant mode of inquiry here because the more time I spent working with the BMoreFit organization, the more I realized that I was gaining greater insight and more meaningful understanding from these conversations than from my formal interview transcripts. Over time, and with respondents opening up more frequently to me about potentially incendiary topics (expressing their opinions about BMoreFit, Baltimore city politics, health and fitness ideologies, or their personal lives), I abandoned efforts with formal interviewing and allowed myself to exist in the BAC space and accept whatever came to me as an active participant.

Table 1: *Interview outline*

Note: *IRB approval spanned Nov 30, 2010 – Nov 30, 2012*	Total # of Participants Approached / Actually Participated	Formal Recorded Interviews conducted between Nov 30, 2010—Nov 30, 2012	Informal Noted Interviews conducted between Nov 25, 2009—Nov 30, 2012	Total # of Interviews Conducted	* Informal Conversational Interactions noted between Nov 25, 2009—Nov 30, 2012
Get Fit Director	1/1	5	3	8	21
Board of Directors	8/3	4	8	12	14
Faculty	8/5	7	15	22	24
Students	15/8	0	16	16	31
Safe & Sound Directors	3/2	2	3	5	5
Recreation & Parks Officials	5/3	0	8	8	15
Mayor's office staff	2/0	0	0	0	4
Parents / Baltimore Residents	10/10	0	0	0	20
Total	56/34	18	53	71	134

Note: On average, formal recorded interviews lasted between 45-90 minutes. Informal noted interviews typically took place in between training sessions (when in the BAC) and tended to last anywhere from 5-20 minutes. Conversational interactions varied widely depending on the context and individuals involved. Informal conversational interactions, regardless of the brevity (3-5 minutes in some cases), were noted if, and when, I considered there to be something of significance. For example, student's comments to me, a faculty member, or other student's were often made in passing conversations amidst a busy schedule of active learning.

As such, I counted 134 informal conversations that, while not following a formal structure of recorded interviewing, yielded significant insights and deeper meanings, which I believe could only occur because they flowed organically. I count these conversations as interviews rather than observations because I was a direct participant in the social exchange from which I recorded words, expressions, and non-verbal cues. Further, while I spoke to people far more than 134 times, I only count these conversations as interviews because they were substantial, meaningful encounters, and because something particularly noteworthy was uttered and I felt compelled to record it in my field notes. Numerous other conversations and interactions occurred that, while not specifically recorded as noteworthy events, also contribute to the development of impressions, and eventually, the specific themes I wrote about throughout this dissertation.

Methodological contingencies

Subsequently, and reflective of the theoretical and methodological contingencies I expressed previously, I largely dismissed the protocols of "purposive sampling" (Berg, 2001), epistemological assumptions concerning the interview process (Patton, 1990), and open-ended, yet still semi-structured, interview format (Amis, 2005), I had proposed prior to my engagement with BMoreFit. Time spent in the field, the acquisition of new "roles" as part of my participation, and the changing nature of my relationships to the people there, led me to revisit the (in)congruency of my stated "moral-sacred" epistemological position (Amis & Silk, 2008) with the still somewhat formalized and structured form of data collection I was pursuing. In other words, desirous to successfully complete my dissertation and earn a PhD, I had an agenda (conducting research and collecting data) that was dependent upon how well I could "extract" insider information from participants in BMoreFit through my ambitious

inquiring. And while this strategy was more or less effective for approaching BMoreFit faculty, BCRP officials, and other organizational leaders (effectively providing them the opportunity to verbally advocate for their positions and speak favorably about what they did within their respective organizations), the formalities of this method were completely inappropriate for BMoreFit students.

Before long, I also realized that this directed form of inquiring was wholly inadequate for understanding and capturing the deep perspectives, values, beliefs, and politics that I was desirous to uncover. Formal interviewing was yielding formal responses that did not shed light on how an individual's positionality helped constitute, and was constituted by, their values, beliefs, and perspectives concerning fitness, health, and the broader issues of power, inequality, and racial and class privilege. Influenced by the ethical considerations of feminist communitarianism (St. Pierre, 2011) and transnational feminism (Chaudhry, 2000; Visweswaran, 1994), I resolved that, rather than chase after "data" by asking probing questions and anxiously seeking to confirm and carry-out interview appointments, I would re-focus my efforts on developing relationships and opening spaces for dialogic interaction and meaningful exchange that would facilitate more organic responses. Further, and rather than conduct formal focus-groups with BMoreFit students as I had also proposed, I instead engaged in numerous informal conversations with students that avoided an explicit structure, purpose, and the potential for power imbalances. Instead, we just talked. And the more we talked, the less I tried to be a "researcher"; the less time I spent wearing my "researcher hat" when in the empirical site.

With regard to BMoreFit students, I made sure that they knew who I was, that I was conducting research about their experiences with BMoreFit, and that I would be writing about them, but found that I did not need to go further than that. When I tried to, I was

effectively shut down by students' obvious lack of interest in my pseudo-academic explanations of research purpose and informed consent, and in one instance, told by David, "…*ain't really worried what you gonna write bout us, but can we just get on wit it though, my dude*? [laughing]" (see chapter 3 for detail concerning my relationship with David). In short, I had to let go of the certainties and assumptions I brought with me concerning how I was going to carry out my data collection, and instead, allow myself to develop relationships as my own 'Self', rather than my researcher 'Self'. I let go of my anxious "will to know" and the inherent limitations my researcher self was having on the process, and instead tried to co-exist with others is the empirical site (the BAC primarily) and allow meanings to emerge naturally from my contextual situated-ness (Bhattacharya, 2007). For example, the concerns I had initially expressed in my research proposal, concerning identity politics within qualitative interviewing (Amis, 2005; Amis & Silk, 2005), did not register as significant barriers any longer because I was no longer employing that method with them. Additionally, the more I read about forms of participatory action research and engaged literature calling for –post reconfigurations of how to conduct qualitative work *with* people, rather than *about* or *on* them (Bhattacharya, 2007; Boser, 2007; Freire, 2000; St. Pierre, 2011; Visweswaran, 1994), I increasingly wanted to engage in forms of inquiry that enabled me to work alongside students, and toward some collectively determined goal.

Nevertheless, as outlined in chapter four in particular, the pluralistic Selves I had constructed out of my border crossing lifestyle habitus were complicated within the BAC space, ruptured by my inability to publically dissociate from my "personal trainer" and "academic" Self once employing such codes to gain empirical access. Subsequently, BMoreFit students, adroitly savvy in deconstructing the intentions of authority figures, initially perceived in me, that these positional subjectivities were in conducive, and

incompatible, with someone claiming a knowledge of street culture, and experience within urban spaces and communities. Introduced by the Director in terms of my credentials (a former personal trainer and University of Maryland "researcher") and the role I would be playing within BMoreFit ("research partner"), I lost the opportunity to make my own first impression, and it took some time to gain students' trust that I was not just another BMoreFit drone. Thus, while some students (David, Iesha, and Tyler) eventually opened up to me away from the purview of BMoreFit organizers, it was a difficult process that forced me into reflexive considerations of researcher role, the co-construction of knowledge, and embodied dialogic encounters.

Photovoice

In addition to the standard qualitative methods of personal interviewing and participant-observation, I also attempted to employ the more emergent methodology of Photovoice (i.e., participants were given disposable cameras and asked to photograph anything that they feel is representative of, or speaks towards, their lived experiences concerning health, fitness, and the body) to enable the youth participating in the program to articulate in-depth, what defines their communities' physical culture, and environmental conditions, pertaining to fitness and health. In this way, participants could be intimately involved in the process of producing knowledge, determining what questions to ask or topics to consider, and allowing themes to emerge naturally from social interactions. In this sense, Heyl's (2001) notion of the 'traveler metaphor' corroborates this sensibility in as much as the researcher as a 'traveler' is focused on engaging others in conversation from which meaningful dialogue and understanding is reached; a process enabling the co-production of knowledge. According to Wang and Burris (1997), Photovoice has three main goals: "(1) to

enable people to record and reflect their community's strengths and concerns (2) to promote critical dialogue and knowledge about personal and community issues through large and small group discussions about photographs, and (3) to reach policy makers" (p. 369). This methodology has been employed in a wide range of public health and social justice issues since the mid-1990s and emphasizes empowerment, the co-creation of knowledge, community building, and the balancing of research and practice (Catalani & Minkler, 2010). To paraphrase Wang, Cash, and Powers (2000), who knows the health disparities and socio-economic inequities of Baltimore city better than those who directly experience it?

By enabling the youth participating in the BMoreFit program to show, through visual images and their own commentary about them, what impacts upon their daily experiences with, and understandings of, public health and fitness, they have a stake in the process of creating knowledge rather than simply being probed for selective information via surveys, questionnaires, and traditional interview formats. Nevertheless, after meeting with students to discuss the parameters of photovoice, including important ethical considerations when capturing moments, places, and people, I gained the sense that, other than David and Mike, many of the students were less than excited about participating, and perhaps viewed the activity as just another task BMoreFit wanted them to do. Thus, despite my efforts to assure them that the project was independent of BMoreFit, I could not convince Erika, Asia, Iesha, and Tyler that their involvement was only intended for the purposes of documenting health disparities and making their voices heard on such matters. Or, perhaps they did not want to speak on such issues, or had become weary of their involvement in BMoreFit and just wanted to move on (at the Director's request, I had to wait until after student's finished the program to engage them in the Photovoice project). For example, Iesha expressed her sentiment that "I think it sounds great, but I don't really want to do it." When I asked her

why she felt this way, she responded that, "there's just other things I want to do right now. Now that BMoreFit is done." Further, as noted in chapter three, only David and Mike returned their cameras, and neither of them could be reached to further discuss their images, and connect them to a broader discourse on health disparities in their communities.

Discourse analysis

While the methodologies previously explained were employed to engage with the lived experiences of those participating in, and being influenced by, the philanthropic efforts of BMoreFit —indeed, these are integral to the project overall—the role of discursive or textual analysis must also be acknowledged as a fluid part of data collection, and analysis, throughout the entire project. In as much as my previous discussion of the cultural studies' oeuvre outlined my engagement with the theory-method of articulation and radical contextualism, the process of mapping the contested physical cultural landscape of fitness, health, and activity in BMoreFit, and Baltimore city, required the interpretive "reading" of various texts (McDonald & Birrell, 1999). It is important to consider the way in which language or text (re)produces hierarchies of power, and how individuals negotiate their own identities, experiences, and understandings in relation to broader discursive forces. As such, discourse analysis enables an examination of multiple perspectives that, according to Kincheloe (2001), moves the ethnographer-as-bricoleur "towards a deeper level of analysis as he or she see's 'what's not there' in physical presence, what is not discernible by the ethnographic eye" (p. 686). Thus, discourse analysis encompassed one aspect of my contingent methodological approach (King, 2005) that sought to be "multiperspectival" (Kellner, 1997), and radically contextual, in analyzing and interpreting the relationships between discourse, materiality, and lived experience (Frow & Morris, 2000). While more

prominent in chapter one, given the focus on mapping the landscape of Baltimore's voluntary sector for health and fitness, discourse analysis was frequently deployed in terms of the following:

1. Mapping the context of Baltimore City's socio-spatial segregation and physical activity inequities: Required engaging with a variety of media sources (popular and academic) related to the contemporary condition of Baltimore City governance (public policy, public relations campaigns, and non-profit promotions) and the role that physical activity, health, and fitness-based philanthropy played in this context.
2. Official BMoreFit program promotions and rhetoric: Entailed an analysis of all discursive sources emerging from the program itself (print materials, online website, common verbal expressions, etc.).
3. Popular media about physical activity, health, and fitness on a national and local scale: In as much as popular understandings of health and fitness are, in part, influenced by national and local media, textual material (television, film, magazines, websites, billboards, etc.) that emerged from interactions with participants in the field was closely examined. For example, fitness instructors and BMoreFit students occasionally brought up in conversation, examples of fitness-oriented advertisements that, from their own perspective and interpretations, revealed nuanced layers of lived experience reflective of their vastly different positional subjectivities.

Data Management: Coding, analysis, and interpretation

From the start of data collection processes, all participants were given a pseudonym to

protect their identities. Using the already established categories of "faculty" and "students" as prescribed by organizational gatekeepers, observations of participants were recorded, coded, and stored under these general titles under new interpretive themes emerged. All data from observational notes and interview transcripts were password protected, stored on my personal computer, and backed up on an external hard drive that is also password protected. All data will be destroyed on February 1st, 2022 in accordance with the University of Maryland's IRB policy on records retention and disposal, which states that records cannot be destroyed less than ten years after collection. February 1st, 2022 is over eleven years from the completion of data collection.

Coding and data analysis began immediately following transcription of the first interview, rather than waiting until all interviews had been completed and transcribed. The reason for doing so was that it "allows the interviewer to get an early appreciation of the data, to start identifying themes, and if necessary, to modify the interview instrument" (Amis, 2005, p. 128). In this sense, eschewing the modalities of positivist data collection and interpretation, data from all sources were inductively analyzed following Lincoln and Guba's (1985) methods for naturalistic inquiry. In other words, acknowledging that, "themes may originate in predetermined research questions, in the research instrument, from concepts or categories used by other researchers, from the data, or from the socio-cultural context" (Amis, 2005, p. 128), the process of coding took into account both predetermined categorical themes, as well as emergent ones that reflected observed phenomena. To this degree, and following loosely from Amis (2005), the initial predetermined categories for data collection included the following:

1. Setting – Locating the BMoreFit organization in its broader political economic context helped identify key interrelationships between government retrenchment, emergent

voluntarism, and the politics of philanthropy.

2. Program/Organizational activities – Observations of everyday routines and physical activities in the BAC contributed greatly to interpretations of BMoreFit's fitness pedagogy and philanthropic intent.
3. Values/beliefs/culture – Observations, conversations, and interviews revealed, often divergent, understandings and perspectives, pertaining to political ideologies and attitudes concerning standards for health, fitness, and nutrition.
4. Racial/Ethnic and Class based divisions – Emerged as a key factor influencing how faculty and students differently viewed health and fitness disparities, and the most appropriate methods through which to intervene.
5. Experiential – Interview data, conversations and observations which suggested the interrelationships of program participants' everyday lives outside the BAC, and their experiences within BMoreFit.
6. Biographical – specific to individuals (Director, Faculty, Students) lived experiences within, and outside of, BMoreFit.

Beginning with open coding into these initial categories, new themes emerged, reflective of the context and interactions between faculty and students within the BAC. For example, observations of student discontent (see chapter 3) were organized thematically to reflect the manner in which students strategically negotiated their participation, while still maintaining disagreements with some of BMoreFit's pedagogical healthism (i.e., suggesting the need for improved body composition through individually based bodywork activities and lifestyle modifications). This process was repeated until "no new themes emerged and categories [became] saturated" (Amis, 2005, p. 129) according to a broad, yet flexibly contingent framework for interpreting and making sense of collected data within this empirical context (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Langley, 1999).

Stemming from my epistemological proclivities, I believe that the process of interpreting data begins immediately (in real time) as observations are being made. In other

words, I do not think it necessary to follow a strict methodological linearity; collecting all data for a study in one phase before sitting down to make sense of it in the next phase. Drawing from Lincoln & Guba's (1985) explication of the methods of 'naturalistic inquiry', data from all sources were inductively analyzed throughout the process of data collection, in order to allow new themes to develop, different perspectives and interpretations to emerge, and a more nuanced understanding to inform the ongoing write-up of the project. Returning again to King's (2005) notion of 'methodological contingency' through cultural studies 'radical contextualism' (Grossberg, 1997b), coding and thematizing data also followed a contingent framework in which, the organization of data moved from broad structural categories, to context specific emergent themes. In this sense, my overall interpretive method could be characterized as *radically contextual naturalistic auto/ethnography*, in which, macro structural theories of political economy and urban neoliberalism (prominent within the introduction and chapters 1 and 2) merged with micro humanistic theories of fitness and health pedagogy, embodied class habitus, racial and ethnic studies, and reflexivity (present in later chapters).

Considering quality in qualitative inquiry

In addition to the "crisis of representation" in qualitative inquiry, Amis & Silk (2008), and Denzin & Lincoln (2008) discuss the "crisis of legitimation" or of, "validity," in as much as the quality of qualitative data, like any form of inquiry, should be assessed and questioned. Thus, while most qualitative inquiry is not attempting to identify universal truths, and objective facts, that can be measured and generalized according to standard protocols, the rigor of qualitative inquiry must be judged according to alternative criteria from that of quantitative, positivistic science. Part of this involves the detailed and self-reflexive

explication of the inquirer's positionality and ontological, epistemological, and axiological assumptions. In this sense, I followed what Amis & Silk (2005; 2008) outline as a "moral-sacred epistemology" that is rooted in a feminist communitarian ethic committed to social justice, empowerment, shared governance, human dignity, and nonviolence (Harding, 2004). Furthermore, in as much as cultural studies' inherent political intellectual activism underpinned my research foci, questions, interpretations and so forth, the "quality" of my work should be judged according to the openly stated and self-reflexive epistemological and axiological positions I occupy as the inquirer.

Further, there were two methodological protocols I employed in order to ensure a rigorous process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data. With regard to interview data, a process of participant-checking occurred in which, after transcribing interviews verbatim (within 24 hours of the interview), the participant was sent the interview transcript and given the opportunity to review it for accuracy, and be involved in the co-construction of knowledge (to check for errors, ask for sensitive material to be removed from the record, or to allow them to elaborate on or clarify particular points). This idea of transparency, and inclusion of participants in the research process, was something I wanted to explore further in this project, particularly following what Fine & Weis (2008), writing in Denzin & Lincoln (2008), discuss as "participatory action research" within urban environments. Thus, while failing to fully materialize, given the constraints discussed in chapter four, the Photovoice method, represented what I had hoped would be, a participatory form of engaged praxis. Instead, my desire to provide a deeply reflexive, detailed, and personal account of lived experience within this empirical context, shifted into the realm of the auto/ethnographic once realizing that students were unable, or unwilling, to fully engage in the project. Thus, chapter four became an auto/ethnographic narration of research contingencies, and the co-

construction of knowledge, through embodied interaction in both elite spaces of fitness (the BAC), and communal spaces of recreation and everyday life (Baltimore city recreation centers and surrounding communities).

Additionally, many qualitative researchers discuss the concept of 'triangulation' as a way to gain breadth and depth of interpretive rigor through multiple modes of data collection (Denzin, 1989; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Through methods of textual analysis, participant observation, qualitative interviewing, autoethnographic writing, and an attempt at Photovoice methodology, the triangulation of data from these various sources also facilitated the development of emergent themes, which appear as sub-headings within each empirical chapter. Nevertheless, conscious of what Richardson (2000) discusses as the epistemologically diverse process of crystallization, rather than the assumed validity of triangulation; she suggests that, "there are far more than three sides by which to approach the world…and crystallization provides us with a deepened, complex, thoroughly partial understanding of the topic" (pp. 13-14). As such, while I endeavored to capture a rich, detailed, and contextually specific analysis of BMoreFit, and the physical cultural landscapes of Baltimore City, through multiple methodological approaches, I also accepted the contingencies of the data collection process which, after a failed attempt at Photovoice for example, presented an opportunity to reflexively narrate my research experiences, and dialogic encounters, with faculty, students, and Baltimore city residents (see prologue and chapter four).

APPENDIX B
BMoreFit Photovoice Project Documents

Photovoice Project Outline: Photography, Power, and Ethics

Being able to document a moment, an experience, or an individual is an act of power that comes with a responsibility and an ethical mandate that the purpose of the photograph is intended to help facilitate a needs assessment (in other words, to help the community). It is important that we understand and avoid any practice that may cause undue harm, embarrassment, or intrusion for anyone involved.

1. Participant photographers shall avoid intrusion into any individual's privacy while taking photographs unless given permission. However, pictures that show a scene where persons are unrecognizable or anonymous do not require individual permission.

2. Participant photographers shall not take photographs that would cause embarrassment to subjects even if consent has been received.

3. Participant photographers shall not take photographs that display subjects in a false light or that distort the truth. The interpretation of one person may not reflect the reality of another. Consideration for how a subject might react to such depiction shall be encouraged.

Key Themes of this Assessment:

Health Barriers in Baltimore City

Key questions to think about:

1. In your community (can include home, school, work, etc.), what prevents people from exercising, eating healthy foods, and living a healthy lifestyle?

2. In your community, what things contribute to people being unhealthy?

3. In your community, what things contribute to people being more healthy?

Important Dates:

1. **Friday July 29th** - Return cameras to BAC (I will develop the film prior to the next meeting)

2. **Friday August 5th at 4pm** - Participate in a photo workshop at BAC. With photos in hand, you will have a chance to speak about them and tell why you took them, what they mean to you and/or for the Baltimore community. After completing the workshop, each participant will be entered to win a Casio Exilim 10.1 megapixel digital camera.

- - - -

BMoreFit Happy Hour Event Announcement

BMoreFit is having a Fitness Happy Hour and you are INVITED! We would love to have you join us for healthy snacks, to meet new and old friends from the Baltimore Fitness Academy, and to discuss what BMore Fit is up to.

BMoreFit will be partnering with the University of Maryland to conduct research this summer to determine the future of BMoreFit. We would love to see you and extend an invitation to participate in an exciting new form of research called Photovoice. The BMore Fit Photovoice project will provide you with a unique opportunity to voice your own perspectives, concerns, and experiences with health in your communities through visual images.

For an example of what Photovoice is, please visit the websites below:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICTVdcvCUoU

http://www.photovoice.org/

We are at a pivotal moment in our efforts to create healthier communities in Baltimore and hope you can join us to carry on this tremendous cause that you all have been a part of. We look forward to seeing you.

When: Friday June 24th
5:30-7:30 p.m.

Where: Meadow Mill Athletic Club

R.S.V.P. to Jon Kaplan @ jkaplan@bmorefit.org

When I say "BMore" you say "Fit!"

APPENDIX C
BMoreFit Survey Project Documents

BMoreFit Call to Action Announcement (Drafted by the Director)

BMORE Fit Needs Your Help

What is BMOREfit?

Currently one in every three students in the Baltimore City school system is obese. BMore Fit is an organization designed to assist inner city youth in providing training and employment opportunities. BMore fit seeks to educate, train, certify and place these students in positions where they can serve as Fitness Ambassadors - spreading the word about the importance of fitness and living a healthy lifestyle. BMore fit was established in 2008.

The current objectives with BMoreFit are to:

1. Teach, train, and certify urban youth to become student fitness coaches
2. Bring Student Coaches to lead efforts in their schools and communities to teach fitness.
3. Improve the health of urban youth by decreasing obesity among this high risk group

Current Status of BMOREfit:

BMOREfit is at a crossroads and needs help determining the best path forward for this innovative program. There are many programs in the market today that seek to combat some of the same issues as BMOREfit and we need to determine: 1) Does BMOREfit have the right to succeed with its current objectives?, 2) What is BMOREfit's competitive advantage in the marketplace?, 3) Is it sustainable?, 4) Is it scalable?

Project Description:

BMOREfit is looking for a highly motivated leader to help our organization make the greatest impact on our community. This may or may not include continuing as a stand-alone organization.

Key Deliverables of the Assignments Include:

1. A comprehensive assessment of the competitive landscape, including non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, school and after-school programs, and other relevant benchmarks as identified by the student.
2. Research to help assist in final recommendation. Research should be conducted among key stakeholders such as: Students, Teachers, Administrators, and Parents to assess what it takes to make a difference in this community.
3. Recommend and gain alignment to a future looking plan that addresses the following questions: 1) Should BMOREfit continue to stand alone or should it partner with an existing organization?, 2) What is the most effective way to impact the community to combat obesity? 3) What should the key objectives be for BMOREfit moving forward? 4) What should the structure of the organization be to make the broadest impact?

Health Commissioner Official Endorsement

CITY OF BALTIMORE
STEPHANIE RAWLINGS-BLAKE, Mayor

HEALTH DEPARTMENT
OXIRIS BARBOT, M.D., Commissioner
1001 E. Fayette Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

July 27, 2011

To Baltimore City residents:

The Baltimore City Health Department is pleased to support the research being conducted by a team from the University of Maryland School of Public Health in coordination with the non-profit, Baltimore Fitness Academy, or BMoreFit (www.bmorefit.org). Researchers will be administering a survey to assess what exists across the city in terms of resources for, and provision of, programs focused on physical activity, fitness, nutrition, and health and wellness.

Furthermore, it is hoped that the information gathered will help improve the efficacy of organizations like BMoreFit, facilitate the development of further research to aid public policy, and promote greater coordination amongst educators, citizens, professionals, policymakers, non-profit representatives, practitioners, community organizers, and the like.

We ask for Baltimore citizens and all public and private constituencies invested in promoting the health and wellness of Baltimore's youth to support the efforts of the University of Maryland and BMoreFit by completing a survey and lending their help.

Sincerely,

Oxiris Barbot, M.D.
Commissioner of Health

Baltimore City Health Department
1001 E. Fayette Street • Baltimore, Maryland 21202
Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, Mayor – Oxiris Barbot, M.D., Commissioner of Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Health Department Endorses Research on Physical Activity in Baltimore City

Baltimore, MD (July 22, 2011) – This letter is to indicate the Baltimore City Health Department's support for research being conducted by a team from the University of Maryland School of Public Health in coordination with the non-profit, Baltimore Fitness Academy, or BMoreFit (www.bmorefit.org). Researchers will be administering a survey to assess what exists across the city in terms of resources for, and provision of, programs focused on physical activity, fitness, nutrition, and health/wellness.

Furthermore, it is hoped that the information gathered will help improve the efficacy of organizations like BMoreFit, facilitate the development of further research to aid public policy, and promote greater coordination amongst educators, citizens, professionals, policymakers, non-profit representatives, practitioners, community organizers, and the like. We ask for Baltimore citizens and all public and private constituencies invested in promoting the health and wellness of Baltimore's youth to support the efforts of the University of Maryland and BMoreFit by completing a survey and lending their help.

Letter to Mayor's Office and Health Department

Department of Kinesiology
2351 School of Public Health Building
College Park, Maryland 20742-2611

July 6, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to inform the Mayor's office, Health Department, and other Baltimore City constituencies about research being carried out by a team from the University of Maryland School of Public Health in coordination with the Baltimore Fitness Academy (BMoreFit). The founder and Director of BMoreFit (www.bmorefit.org) has invested significant time and resources, and gone to great lengths, to improve the health of Baltimore youth. And despite the success of dramatically changing the lives of a small group of young people, there is only so much a few concerned Baltimore citizens and fitness professionals in the organization can do. With a goal to educate and mentor urban youth to live healthier lifestyles and reduce childhood obesity, BMoreFit, like many other public and private organizations across the city, is in a position of being stretched for resources and subsequently limited in what it can offer to help Baltimore youth reach their full potential as healthy, happy, and productive adults. In order to better meet the physical activity/health needs of Baltimore youth, it is our contention that greater coordination is needed amongst educators, citizens, professionals, policymakers, non-profit representatives, practitioners, community organizers, and the like. This begins by assessing what exists across the city in terms of resources for, and provision of, programs focused on physical activity, fitness, nutrition, and health/wellness.

Researchers from the University of Maryland School of Public Health have taken interest in BMoreFit as part of work being done on health disparities and socio-spatial inequity in Baltimore City. In terms of physical activity opportunities and access, our team will be administering a physical activity assessment survey from which we hope to gather information that will be useful for BMoreFit and other small non-profit organizations, facilitate the development of research to aid in public policy, and promote greater coordination amongst Baltimore's public and private organizations invested in the city's youth. From this initial survey, we will attempt to conduct interviews with representatives from Baltimore organizations ranging from Recreation & Parks to Public schools and non-profits in order to map the landscape of physical activity programming. With the support of the Mayor's office, Heath Department, and other relevant groups, we hope to broaden the scale and scope of potential respondents who can help us accomplish the stated objectives. Thank you for you time and concern in this important matter. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours faithfully,

Ronald L. Mower, M.S.
Doctoral Candidate / BMoreFit Research Partner
University of Maryland School of Public Health
Phone: (301) 919-9935 / E-mail: mower1@umd.edu

Jon A. Kaplan
Executive Director / OSI Fellow
Baltimore Fitness Academy (BMoreFit)
Phone: (410) 235-7000 / E-mail: jkaplan@bmorefit.org

Baltimore City Physical Activity Assessment Survey

This survey is part of research being conducted by BMoreFit and the Department of Kinesiology at the University of Maryland School of Public Health

The Baltimore Fitness Academy (BMoreFit) is a non-profit corporation that educates and mentors urban youth to live healthier lifestyles with the goal of reducing childhood obesity.

For questions, please contact:

Ron Mower: Kinesiology Doctoral Candidate / BMoreFit Research Partner
mower1@umd.edu or (301) 919-9935

Or

Jon Kaplan: Executive Director, BMoreFit
jkaplan@bmorefit.org or (410) 241-8444

Baltimore City Physical Activity Assessment
General Survey

Thank you for taking a moment to help us in our effort to improve the health of Baltimore Youth and communities across the city. Your participation is voluntary and you may stop filling out the survey anytime you choose. Your responses are completely anonymous and confidential.

1. Please choose one or more of the categories that best describes your role in relation to Baltimore City Youth.

(1) – School Administrator ☐
(2) – Teacher / Physical Educator ☐
(3) – Parent of child enrolled in Baltimore City Schools ☐
(4) – Recreation & Parks Employee/Volunteer ☐
(5) – Philanthropy / Non-Profit Representative ☐
(6) – Baltimore City Resident ☐
(7) – Baltimore City/County Council / City or State Delegate ☐
Please specify: _____
(8) – Health Department / Social Services / Or any Government Employee ☐
Please specify: _____
(9) – Other ☐
Please specify: _____

2. Baltimore youth are getting an adequate amount of daily physical activity?

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3. There are not enough public facilities, school programs, and physical activity resources for Baltimore youth to be active and physically fit.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. Baltimore youth are, for the most part, taking advantage of the resources offered to them?

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5. The quality of Baltimore City's public facilities, school programs, and physical activity resources is:

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please read the question prompts below and then rank each of the statements that follow in the order of their importance, with 1 being the most important and 6 being the least important.

Question: What do you consider to be the greatest barriers to our young people being more physically active and healthy?

Please use each number only once and enter it into the boxes next to each statement (you may cross out each number as you enter them into the boxes).

1 2 3 4 5 6

5. Lack of education about how to be physically fit/active and eat healthy ☐

6. Limited public resources that are well-maintained (playgrounds, sports fields, pools, basketball/tennis courts, jogging/bike trails, etc.) ☐

7. Lack of safe outdoor areas to engage in activity ☐

8. Limited access to fresh, healthy foods ☐

9. Prevalence of television, video games, and other sedentary activities ☐

10. Lack of healthy/active adult role models at home and/or in the community ☐

Question: Please rank in order of importance what entities best contribute to, and provide for, the overall health, wellness, and physical activity of Baltimore youth at this time.

Please use each number only once and enter it into the boxes next to each statement (you may cross out each number as you enter them into the boxes).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

11. Public Schools
(including after-school sport/fitness programs) ☐

12. Recs & Parks ☐

13. Non-profit Organizations
(including youth groups and mentoring programs) ☐

14. Faith-based organizations ☐

15. Parents and Community Leaders ☐

16. Private Gyms/Fitness Centers ☐

17. City Health Department ☐

Question: What has the best chance of increasing physical activity and improving the health of Baltimore youth, and indeed, all of Baltimore's citizens?

Please use each number only once and enter it into the boxes next to each statement (you may cross out each number as you enter them into the boxes).

1 2 3 4 5 6

18. Greater public investment in city schools, health services, and recs & parks ☐

19. Greater private investment from funders of Baltimore charities for preventative health programs ☐

20. More public-private, non-profit, and community-based partnerships addressing local health concerns ☐

21. More non-profit fitness/health organizations and programs focused on meeting the needs of youth ☐

22. Mass public relations campaigns providing information about how to be healthy and active ☐

23. Stronger political leadership in addressing health concerns ☐

24. Greater health/fitness education opportunities/programs for the parents of Baltimore City Youth ☐

_____
__

(1) – **School Administrator** ☐

1. What position do you occupy within the Administration of Baltimore City Schools?

_____
_____
_____
_____

2. What age and grade level are the students with whom you primarily work?

Ages: _____

Grade levels: _____

3. What are the minimum requirements of your school's physical education program?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

4. Are these requirements appropriate and attainable? YES ☐ NO ☐

5. If answered NO, why not?

_____

_____
_____

_____
_____
_____

_____

6. How many days per week and for how long do students participate in physical education? _____ Days _____ Hrs. per day

7. The amount of time spent on physical education is:

Too Low	Low	About Right	More than enough	Too Much
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. Does the physical education program focus part of its curriculum on principles of fitness, health, and nutrition?

YES ☐ NO ☐

9. If YES, please indicate what aspects of fitness, health, and nutrition, and to what extent they are taught _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

10. The impact of Physical Education on students' classroom performance is:

(1) Very positive ☐
(2) Good Overall ☐
(3) Negligible/No Effect ☐
(4) Somewhat Negative ☐
(5) Very Detrimental ☐

11. What resources are available for educators to use in teaching about health and fitness?

Please indicate: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

12. On a scale of 1-5 (1 being the worst and 5 being the best) how would you rate the quality of your school's physical education program?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

13. What are the greatest challenges to providing students with a quality physical education program? (**Please mark one or more boxes that apply, and enter a number next to each box indicating the level of its impact out of ten, with ten being a huge challenge and 1 being only a minor challenge. You may leave any boxes blank if they do not apply**).

(1) Budget / Limited Resources
☐ ___
(2) Increased Pressure to focus on test scores / classroom performance
☐ ___
(3) Lack of student interest in Physical Education
☐ ___
(4) Lack of qualified Physical Educators in Baltimore
☐ ___
(5) Lack of government support for physical education in schools ☐ ___
(6) Other: _____
☐ ___

Comments: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

14. What is needed to assist your school in increasing its ability to teach young people about the importance of fitness, health, and nutrition?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

15. Would partnering with a non-profit organization to teach about fitness, health, and nutrition in your school be welcomed?

YES ☐ NO ☐

Why, or Why not? _____
_____
_____
_____

_____
_____
_____
_____

16. If answered YES, would you and/or another representative from your school be willing to discuss a potential partnership with the Baltimore Fitness Academy (BMoreFit)?

YES ☐ NO ☐

If YES, please provide your name and contact information
Please Note: (All information on this survey will be kept 100% confidential)

Name: _____
Contact Number: _____

_____
_____

(2) – **Teacher / Physical Educator** ☐

1. How well is your school supplied with equipment, materials, and facilities to support physical activity classes and after school activities?

Very well ☐ Well ☐ Adequate ☐ Not enough ☐ Very limited ☐

2. Please list equipment that could help you expand what you currently offer or that is needed to offer additional quality instruction. Please include large and small line items.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Question: What type of activities are most often taught in your classes?

<u>Please use each number only once</u> and enter it into the boxes next to each statement (you may cross out each number as you enter them into the boxes).

1 2 3 4 5 6

3. Team Sports ☐
4. Individual Sports ☐
5. Fitness activities ☐
6. Dance/Yoga ☐
7. Active Play/Games ☐
8. Other ☐ Please indicate _____

9. Is there a focus on personal fitness and health in the curriculum?

YES ☐ NO ☐

10. If yes, what aspects of fitness and/or health are emphasized?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

11. On average, how many students are enrolled per physical education class?

0-10 ☐ 10-20 ☐ 21-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 51-60 ☐ Over 60 ☐

12. Are you limited in what you can offer students due to lack of resources/funding?

YES ☐ NO ☐

13. What after school programs focused on health and wellness (fitness, physical activity) exist for students at your school?

Please indicate: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

14. Does your school offer any courses on nutrition and/or that promote healthy eating?

YES ☐ NO ☐

15. If answered yes, how often are they offered? _____

16. Are these classes mandatory? YES ☐ NO ☐

17. On average, what is the level of responsiveness and involvement from students in physical education classes?

Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very Low
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

18. What is needed to help you provide the highest quality physical education program for your students?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

19. Would partnering with a non-profit organization to teach about fitness, health, and nutrition in your school be welcomed?

YES ☐ NO ☐

Why, or Why not? _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

20. If answered YES, would you and/or another representative from your school be willing to discuss a potential partnership with the Baltimore Fitness Academy (BMoreFit)?

YES ☐ NO ☐

If YES, please provide your name and contact information
Please Note: (All information on this survey will be kept 100% confidential)

Name: _____
Contact Number: _____

_____
_____

(3) – **Parent of child enrolled in Baltimore City Schools** ☐

1. Pease tell us what physical activities your child participates in?

(1) **Organized Team Sports** (basketball, football, soccer, etc.) ☐
(2) **Individual Fitness Activities** (weightlifting, jogging, cycling, etc.) ☐
(3) **Walking** (for transportation or leisure) ☐
(4) **Unorganized Play** (outdoor sports, games, and child directed play) ☐
(5) **Other (please indicate)** _____ ☐

2. On average, how often does your child participate in some form of physical activity?

(1) **Daily** ☐ (2) **2-3 times/week** ☐ (3) **Once a week** ☐ (4) **Hardly ever** ☐ (5) **Unsure** ☐

3. If **Daily**, for how many hours, and what activity? _____

4. Where does your child **most often** participate in physical activity?

(1) **At School** ☐ (2) **Rec Center** ☐ (3) **Public Park** ☐ (4) **Private Gym/Fitness Center** ☐

(5) **Non-Profit Organization** ☐ (6) **Street/Neighborhood** ☐ (7) **Other**: _____ ☐

5. Please rank on a scale of 1-10 (1 being the worst and 10 being the best) which of these provides the **safest and highest quality** physical activity experience for

your child. **(Please place a number 1-10 on each line)**

(1) **Public Schools** _____
(2) **Recreation Centers** _____
(3) **Public Parks** _____
(4) **Private Gyms / Fitness Centers** _____
(5) **Non-Profit Organizations** _____
(6) **Street/Neighborhood** _____
(7) **Other**: _____ _____

6. Are there any barriers that prevent your child from being physically active?

YES ☐ NO ☐

7. Are any of the following factors involved in preventing your child from being physically active? (**Please check all that apply and insert a number 1-10 to indicate the amount, 10 being the strongest factor and 1 being the weakest factor)**

(1). Lack of Money / Resources ☐ _____

(2). Lack of Time ☐ _____

(3). Neighborhood safety concerns ☐ _____

(4). Difficulty accessing public facilities ☐ _____

(5). Stress / Lack of Motivation ☐ _____

(6). Injury / Sickness ☐ _____

8. Please explain any other factors not listed in the previous questions:
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

9. In your opinion, are there enough youth programs and facilities in Baltimore to provide young people with adequate opportunities to be physically active?

YES ☐ NO ☐

10. How often are you physically active?

(1) **Daily** (2) **2-3 times/week** (3) **Once a week** (4) **Rarely** (5) **Never**

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

11. What form of physical activity do you generally engage in?

_____
_____
_____

_____
_____

(4) – **Recreation & Parks Employee/Volunteer** ☐

1. What programs are offered for young people at your recreation center or park facility?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2. Do any of these programs have a specific focus on teaching youth about fitness, health, and nutrition?

YES ☐ NO ☐

If answered YES, please describe:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

3. How important is it for your facility to emphasize fitness, nutrition, and health, and to offer programs/ classes to educate the public on such matters?

Very Important Important Not sure Somewhat important Not at all important

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

4. Out of the following activities, please estimate the percent of each in making

up all youth programs offered at your facility. (Please distribute the percentages so that the sum adds up to 100%).

(1). Team Sports _____%
(2). Individual Sports _____%
(3). Fitness activities _____%
(4). Dance/Yoga _____%
(5). Active Play/Games _____%
(6). Crafts / Arts _____%
(7). Educational _____%
(8). Mentoring _____%
(9). Service _____%
(10). Other _____% Please indicate: _____

5. How well are these programs able to meet the demand of the community? (**Please mark one box only**).

(1) **Extremely Well** (able to provide high quality access to all desiring) ☐
(2) **Good** (able to provide good quality access to most) ☐
(3) **Average** (able to provide decent quality access to many) ☐
(4) **Below average** (can only provide minimal quality and limited access to some) ☐
(5) **Poor** (extremely limited in the level of access and quality that can be offered) ☐

6. Please rank the greatest challenges preventing your facility from being able to provide full, high quality access to the surrounding community? (**Using each number only once, please rank order each of the following factors with 1 being the greatest challenge, and 6 being the smallest**).

(1) Budget concerns / Limited resources ___
(2) Overwhelming demand ___
(3) Size of facility ___
(4) Lack of qualified Instructors / Physical Educators / Volunteers ___
(5) Lack of government funding ___
(6) Other: _____ ___

7. What is needed to enhance the quality and/or quantity of program offerings at your facility?

_____
_____
_____

_____
_____

8. Would you consider partnering with Baltimore based non-profits to enhance offerings for physical activity, fitness, and nutrition at your facility?

YES ☐ NO ☐

Why, or Why Not?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

9. Is there enough physical space and time in the program schedule to permit a fitness, health, and nutrition class to be taught by a representative of BMoreFit?

YES ☐ NO ☐

10. If answered YES, would you and/or another representative from your organization be willing to discuss a potential partnership with the Baltimore Fitness Academy (BMoreFit)?

YES ☐ NO ☐

If YES, please provide your name and contact information
Please Note: (All information on this survey will be kept 100% confidential)

Name: _____
Contact Number: _____

_____
_____

(5) – Philanthropy / Non-Profit Representative ☐

1. What is the name of the philanthropic / non-profit organization you work with?

_____
_____

2. What is your position/affiliation within the organization?

_____
_____
_____

3. Why was the organization initially created and by whom? Was it in response to a specific issue or problem?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

4. Who is the target population for this organization's efforts? Pease check all that apply.

(1) **Children** (ages 3-11) _____
(2) **Youth** (ages 12-18) _____
(3) **Adults** (ages 19-64) _____
(4) **Elderly** (ages 65+) _____
(5) **Women** _____
(6) **At-Risk** / **Disadvantaged** _____
(7) **Specific Minority groups** _____ **(please indicate)**: _____
(8) **Health Risks / Obese** _____
(9) **Unemployed** _____
(10) **Homeless** _____
(11) **Incarcerated / Parolees** _____
(12) **Other** _____ **(please indicate)**: _____

5. Where does the organization operate / carry out its purpose?

_____
_____
_____
_____

6. When are most of the organization's activities carried out?

Time of day _____

Days of the week _____

7. Who works for the organization?

(1) Volunteers ☐

(2) Paid Employees ☐

(3) Both ☐ About what percentage of each?
_____

8. Broadly speaking, what is the stated purpose or mission of the organization?
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

9. What are the specific goals by which the organization seeks to accomplish the stated purpose/mission?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

10. How successful has the organization been in accomplishing these goals?

Very Successful	Good	Fair	Not good	Unsuccessful
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please explain:
_____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

11. What are the greatest challenges or barriers limiting the organization's ability to accomplish its goals? (**On a scale of 1-10, please indicate any of the following factors with 10 being the greatest challenge, and 1 being the smallest. If not a factor at all, please leave blank**).

(1) Budget Concerns / Limited Resources ___
(2) Overwhelming Demand ___
(3) Facility Too Small ___
(4) Lack of Qualified Employees / Volunteers ___
(5) Lack of External Funding ___
(6) Coordination / Management Issues ___
(7) Difficulty Acquiring / Maintaining Participants ___
(8) Record Keeping / Scheduling ___
(9) Other: _____ ___
(10) Other Cont: _____ ___

12. In your own opinion, what is needed to overcome these challenges?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

13. Would merging with other like-minded organizations lighten the burden and/or increase the impact level of your organization?

YES ☐ NO ☐

14. If answered YES, would you and/or another representative from your organization be willing to discuss a potential partnership with the Baltimore Fitness Academy (BMoreFit)?

YES ☐ NO ☐

If YES, please provide your name and contact information
Please Note: (All information on this survey will be kept 100% confidential)

Name: _____
Contact Number: _____

Baltimore Physical Activity Survey Report

Prepared on behalf of the Baltimore Fitness Academy (BMoreFit)

by

Ronald Mower, Katie Molek, Alville Samuels, and Stephen Waldt

University of Maryland School of Public Health
Department of Kinesiology

SCHOOL OF
PUBLIC
HEALTH

Media Contact: Ronald L. Mower
PhD Candidate/Researcher Coordinator
University of Maryland School of Public Health
2351 SPH Building
College Park, MD 20742
mower1@umd.edu

Purpose:

The Baltimore Physical Activity Assessment survey was intended to provide actionable research data that could potentially inform and enhance the decision-making processes of BMoreFit in their efforts to inculcate healthy change in Baltimore. More specifically, it was our desire that results from the survey could assist the Director of BMoreFit and the Board of Directors in deciding where to focus more of their time and resources to be more effective in achieving their long term goal of reducing childhood obesity through fitness/nutrition education and training. Following the decision to abandon the summer training program in 2011, which produced promising results for a small number of youth but lacked the large scale impact BMoreFit had hoped to facilitate, the survey was also intended to function as a point of contact to engage other Baltimore non-profits and leverage potential partnerships.

Methodology:

Through consultations with the BMoreFit Director, it was our intention to construct a survey instrument that would poll various segments of the population that live and/or work in Baltimore to assess:

1. The location and degree of need within Baltimore communities in terms of health, physical activity, and nutrition.

2. What programs exist within Baltimore that address health, physical activity, and nutrition amongst youth and/or the general population.

3. Potential opportunities for partnerships and/or collaboration with other non-profits, schools, and recreation departments.

As such, a seven part survey instrument was designed to first poll the General Population, and then more specifically address respondents based upon their own identification within one or more of the following six categories (1) School Administrators (2) Teachers/Physical Educators (3) Parents of Baltimore youth (4) Recreation & Parks employees (5) Non-profit representatives (6) Baltimore youth

Each section of the survey asked respondents an average of 15 questions and was administered both online (through www.surveymonkey.com) and through paper-based surveys (delivered to recreation departments across the city). Thus, respondents who completed both the general survey section and one of the specific category sections could have expected to answer about 30 questions. Respondents could refuse to answer any question and/or discontinue their participation at any time.

Survey Parameters/Limitations:

Although significant efforts were made to disseminate the survey through the appropriate channels, responses were limited (83 total respondents). As such, findings from the survey should not be considered significant and explanatory but rather suggestive and instructive in terms of pointing towards particular trends, sentiments, and conditions within the health/physical activity landscapes of Baltimore. Furthermore, the potential insights gained from the subjective responses of participants, including contact information of participants interested in partnering (see below), can still be useful for BMoreFit moving forward.

Basic sample demographics:

Baltimore City Residents – 56.6%
Non-Residents working in Baltimore City – 43.4%
Average age – 35yrs
Female - 68%
Male - 32%
African American – 34.6%
Caucasian – 55.4%

Key Findings:

83% of respondents agree that Baltimore's youth are NOT getting an adequate amount of physical activity.

75% of respondents agree that there are NOT enough public facilities, school programs, and physical activity resources for Baltimore youth to be active and physically fit.

Of the many barriers preventing Baltimore's youth from being more active, 29.8% of those polled suggested that "the prevalence of television, video games, and other sedentary activities" was the most significant barrier, while 24.4% saw "Limited public resources (i.e., playgrounds, sports fields, trails, etc.)" as having the greatest impact.

Out of numerous institutions responsible for/contributing to the health and well-being of Baltimore's youth (i.e., Recs & Parks, Schools, Parents & community leaders, Health Department, etc.), 46% believe that Public Schools (including after school physical activity/sport programs) are best able to provide the environment, resources, and opportunities for youth to be more fit and active.

Coming in second to Public Schools, Non-profit organizations were identified by 20% of respondents as best able to provide the environment, resources, and opportunities for youth to be more fit and active.

While only 3.9% of respondents identified "Greater **private** investment from local and national charitable organizations" as being able to increase the health and activity levels of youth, 49% suggested that "Greater **public** investment in schools, health services, and recs & parks" is critical for providing the means to achieve better health.

Nevertheless, and again coming in second, 26% of respondents indicated that "More non-profit fitness/health organizations" represent the greatest potential to improve the health and wellness of Baltimore's youth.

The majority of respondents in the non-profit section of the survey indicated that the organization they work with has been "very successful" (45%) or "Good" (28%) at accomplishing their stated mission/goals.

Despite this optimism, and certainly reflective of the current economic climate, over 54% of these same respondents noted "Budget concerns/Limited resources" as the most significant barrier to successfully meeting their stated mission/goals.

Participants' voices:

Given the paucity of respondents overall, preventing the achievement of statistical significance, it is perhaps more useful to look at some of the subjective responses of participants entrenched in Baltimore's physical activity landscape to get an idea of what exists in Baltimore in terms of meeting the health/fitness needs of the public and the barriers preventing it.

* *Selected comments from physical educators in public schools concerning equipment needs…*

> -more balls, jump ropes, fitness equipment
>
> -Large and Small foam balls, hula hoops, exercise balls, poly spots, music equipment, large cones, outdoor facilities (courts for basketball, tennis),
>
> -work out machines e.g. treadmill and the likes. basketballs, footballs, pedometers (50 pcs.) Jump rope beads, boom box good enough for gym, standard size white board with a stand
>
> -exercising mats, portable bssketball goals, soccer goals,portable indoors tennis net,table tennis table,tennis balls, basketballs, and volleyball equipment.

What physical educators consider to be the most effective activities for getting students active and interested in physical activity/health…

> -Running, Basketball

-Active games/play and team sports

-Basketball, flag football, cycling, tennis and swimming.

What physical educators suggest is needed to provide higher quality physical education classes in schools…

-more gym equipment, gymnastics

-Assistance in another person to help with watching the students while I am teaching, I am currently the only P.E. teacher with 30 or more students. It is hard to help one group and watch another even when students are in fitness stations

-another adult to help keep the children engage.

-Funds

**Selected comments from Parents concerning the most prevalent barriers to their children being more physically active/healthy…*

-Funding for youth health programs have been taken out of the recreation centers. Recreation centers used to offer more variety of activities besides basketball. More access to kids that like to play other games like ping pong, tennis, racquet ball, and exercise classes. Also offer Dietary Aides to come do community forums with the families and offer healthy eating alternatives

-Need to restore funding so these facilities and program can better educate and inform the community of healthier ways to feed their family that less expensive. These communities are like myself, low to no income and some are receiving public assistance. There is a greater need for more accessible places such as the farmers markets.

-Due to my financial situation I do not own a car. I travel by public transportation. I walk to and from work and I also get my kids to play at the park or the playground. Recreation center does not have enough adult supervision. My daughters were there and they were assaulted by another youth. when I asked my daughter if she informed any adult staff, she stated that there was only one staff person at the facility.

** Selected comments from Baltimore City Recreation & Parks (BCRP) representatives concerning currently available programming for youth sport, physical activity, and health…*

-Youth sports programs, teen weight training programs, After school activity programs.

-sports and day camps

-Educational/interaction tours

-I coordinate Outdoor Recreation City wide. . . Helping Groups use and MAintaine our trails, learn how to ride bikes, canoe and kayak our city waters. Nothing like connecting residents to there local parks by teaching them how they can use them

-After-school program for children and youth, learn to swim program, and East Baltimore DRUG FREE COMMUNITY COALITION,Basketball Leagues,Tennis Instructions etc.

-Park facility offers safe playground areas and also have hiking trails. They also have a public pool.

BCRP representatives on how these programs focus on aspects of health, fitness, and nutrition...

-Overall knowledge of why exercise is important and how nutrition plays a huge role staying healthy.

-Health and Fitness. All of these programs address safety concerns about outdoor activity and really stress the importance of choosing the appropriate activity level for there skill. You would be shocked the amount of teenagers and adults that are so out of shape that they need to slowly increase the amount of miles they can ride on a bike over the summer. They have a hard time riding 1 mile and it takes weeks to condition them to be able to do 10. If you want participant to continue the healthy habit you have to teach them to pace themselves. We also help with special needs recommending activities specific to there needs. For example we have several Knee injury patients that use our Rides around the Reservoir Program to strengthen the muscles around their knees. Its much gentler then running and even walking in some cases.

-Each student is taught the importance of eating the right types of foods to be able to perform in the sports that the play in. They also know that to be able do well in the sports or athletic event that they participate in they must practice and train for competition.

On the ability to meet demand…

-With the lack of funding and staff we are challenged to run these programs. And are limited to certain locations due to the logistics of being able to provide the proper equipment and the amount of staff required to manage these programs.

On the topic of partnering to lessen financial burdens and increase effectiveness…

-We currently have partnered with the PArks and People Foundation for staff and logistic support, However they are limited as well with staff and have no equipment.

* *<u>Non-Profits</u> represented within the survey*

1. Baltimore Tennis Patrons
2. GBWBEC (Greater Baltimore Women's Basketball Education Coalition)
3. BELL (Building Educated Leaders for Life)
4. Greater baltimore Tennis Patrons Association, Inc.
5. YMCA (Y of Central Maryland)
6. Living Classrooms Foundation
7. SquashWise
8. Teach For America
9. Safe and Sound
10. BCF
11. bmorefit
12. BVU

Note: Where identified, the selected, numbered responses below correlate with the above list, not numerical order.

Selected comments from Non-Profits concerning the impetus for creating the organization…

1. for underserved youth

2. Greater Women's Basketball Educational Coalition, Inc. (GBWBEC) was founded by Breezy Bishop a former nationally known Women's Basketball Coach. After retirement Breezy Bishop wanted to continue her support for inner city youth by reinforcing of her mandated coaching philosophy "books before basketball."

3. Organization was created by a group of African American graduate students who wanted to address the needs of at risk, under served African American and Latino youth

4. NJTL Chapter - To use tennis to attract underserved youth to programming that would imrpove health, academic performance and inspire

5. Twenty-two-year-old George Williams, a farmer-turned-department store worker, was troubled by what he saw. He joined 11 friends to organize the first Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), a refuge of Bible study and prayer for young men seeking escape from the hazards of life on the streets. Although an association of young men meeting around a common purpose was nothing new, the Y offered something unique for its time. The organization's drive to meet social need in the community was compelling, and its openness to members crossed the rigid lines separating English social classes.

5. Founded on June 6, 1844 in London, England, the original goal of the organization being to put Christian principles into practice by developing "a healthy spirit, mind, and body."

6. The organization was created to provide youth with a trade and skills to build a career and improve employment opportunities. It was a response inner city youths need for a safe place to go and learn.

7. Created by the ED to open opportunities for students to engage academically and improve their fitness.

8. It was created by Wendy Kopp in 1991 to eliminate educational inequality in this nation.

9. Providing Youth Opportunities in Baltimore

Mission statements/purpose of the organization…

1. fitness; academic/homework support

2. Project Soar is designed to bridge the achievement and opportunity gaps which have a negative impact on at-risk middle and high school students in the Cherry Hill section of Baltimore. Specifically, the program's activities are designed to address students'; 1) low levels of math proficiency, 2) low levels of reading proficiency, and 3) limited opportunities for developing skills that increase resiliency.

3. BELL exists to transform the academic achievements, self-confidence, and life trajectories of children living in under-resourced, urban communities.

5. The Y of Central Maryland is a charitable organization dedicated to developing the full potential of every individual through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

6. Living Classrooms Foundation strengthens communities and inspires young people to achieve their potential through hands-on education and job training, using urban, natural, and maritime resources as "living classrooms."

7. SquashWise is a unique youth development program providing long-term academic and social support to underserved students in Baltimore City, combining intensive tutoring with coaching in the sport of squash as the incentive for academic success. Our year-round program also provides college access programming, nutrition education, and community service to ensure that local youth excel academically, athletically and in life. Squash is a powerful motivator for our students to achieve academic goals. Our short-term goals include attitudinal and behavioral improvement, better grades, and improved fitness and nutrition. Our long-term goals are to ensure 100% high school graduation and to promote college completion and life planning.

8. One day all children in this nation will have the right to a fair and equal education.

Specific goals to achieve mission of the organization…

2. Our program offers academic enrichment, recreation, and cultural activities and is scheduled to incorporate study hall every day, Mondays through Thursdays as well as enriching activities. Our certified teachers facilitate the study hall and tutoring. Although structured study hall is scheduled for the first 30 minutes of the program, our teachers make themselves readily available until 5pm.

3. "BELL delivers educational summer and after school experiences that increase time-on-task and accelerate academic achievement. Student success leads to improved school attendance, higher grades and test scores, and increased graduation rates. Ultimately, by reaching a critical mass of students and breaking cycles of academic under-performance, BELL's impact helps turn around low-performing schools." Each scholar is expected to achieve at least three months gain upon completion of program

5. We have 5 mission strategies for 2015 that include membership, youth asset development, community engagement, becoming an employer of choice and financial viability.

Specifically in Baltimore, we want to increase our corps size by 2015 and branch out of the the City and County int other Eastern Shore and Western Maryland.

Providing high quality programs and living thru our core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility

healthy living youth development social responsibility

At the Y, we are committed to providing family-oriented, affordable, high quality programs that lead to: every child and youth deepening positive values, their commitment to service and their motivation to learn every family building stronger bonds, achieving greater work/life balance and becoming more engaged with their community an enhanced quality of life in the communities in which we operate The Y is a place for everyone. People of all races, ages, faiths, gender, abilities, backgrounds and incomes are welcome.

Reaching over 240,000 people, the Y will be a primary catalyst for Central Maryland's families and individuals to achieve their full potential in spirit, mind and body. It is only once we begin to actually influence lifestyle choices and build sufficient developmental assets in our community on a significant enough scale that we will have lasting, residual influence on the health and well-being of children, youth, adults and families. We will provide experiences and programs that are memorable, unique and enriching, which foster family and community bonds, build character, and promote success for all. By doing so, we will fundamentally enhance the quality of life in the communities in which we operate.

6. Educating students through our own charter school, through after-school and supplemental education programs, and through environmental experiences, with special emphasis on serving students who live in high-risk environments •Eliminating barriers to success for young adults and families through community development, workforce preparation, and life skills training •Educating the general public, and students in particular, about the significance of the region's maritime heritage and its role in shaping who we are as a community and nation

On whether the organization has been successful or not in meeting goals...

2. We have decent participation and those who attend the after school program show higher retention and resiliency in most subjects than the scholars who do not attend.

3. Last year, on average, scholars achieved 6.1 months gain in reading and 6.7 months gain in math.

5. I believe that we continue to impact the community that we planned to impact. We also continue to grow and expand as the needs of the community changes. Community centers are closing and now we are opening a new community center. This just an example of how we are continuing to fill the gaps in the community with not only facilitites but also programming. We maintain

over 20 programs aimed to hit the goals listed.

5. We have done an excellent job of serving the community based on measurable outcomes achieving our stated mission.

6. The mission and goals are clear, the leadership is strong, everyone is held accountable and there's a strong sense of team.

8. It is a HUGE problem and there are so many factors effecting education besides the teacher in the classroom. We are learning to work with the other high-stake players to have more of an impact.

Most significant barriers preventing the achievement of stated mission...

-The economic downturn is our most significant barrier. Services that were once considered indispensable (paid before & after school care, gym memberships) are now considered a luxury.

-Clear goals

-In order to work with urban youth- case managers are needed to deal with many of the management issues of youth with broken homes and lack of maturity.

What is needed to overcome these barriers?

-Additional funding for supplies/equipment ;additional training for employees; increased budget for salaries of employees

-If we could use some of our programs during the school day so that the scholars have more exposure to what the program offers.

-Funding

-Obama for another 4 years. :-)

-Access to more unrestricted funds that can be used on faciliy upkeep, cleaning supplies, marketing materials, equipment, furntiure, etc. Many of the funds are restricted to just programming.

-We need a facility that operates as a youth rec center, with squash courts, classrooms, library, computer lab, and staff space! Only then can we reach a broader pool of youth in Baltimore

-Policy change at the government level and having strong teachers in every single classroom in this nation.

-Additional financial resources

-training, money, outreach

-The national Y learning about brand-building from whomever taught Boys and Girls Club, and a renewed philanthropy effort in this region, reflecting some of the richest counties in the wealthiest state in the Union.

-Data showing biggest need areas - this survey will not generate that

-Money and more staff

Suggestions for Future Development:

It is clear that lack of funding and resources / budget cuts represent the most significant barrier preventing all organizations represented in the survey (and likely in Baltimore as a whole) from having the kind of impact on the health/wellness of Baltimore's youth that they are desirous to have. Subsequently, the continued development and leveraging of potential partnerships will be key in improving the efficacy of fitness/recreation/sport/health programming across the board from recreation and parks to non-profits to public schools. Given the financial and spatial constraints of BMoreFit in its attempt to educate youth to become ambassadors of fitness and health in their own communities, the decision to cancel the summer training program at the Meadow Mill facility appeared inevitable despite the positive impact it had for a few participants. Moving forward, the most effective strategy for inculcating a larger scale promotion of fitness and health education/training is through the placement of trained professionals in sites where physical space is available and young people already congregate. In short, non-profits like BMoreFit need to bring quality fitness programming and knowledgeable professionals to recreation centers and schools that clearly lack this expertise and capacity yet possess both the physical space and target population. For example, in nearly all the recreation centers we visited to disseminate and collect paper-based surveys, there was an abundance of young people largely unsupervised throughout the facilities, with one or two adults (one a paid staff member, the other a volunteer if at all) responsible for monitoring the space rather than providing any form of structured activity. This is clearly a missed opportunity for trained professionals to implement fitness/health/nutrition programming within underutilized and overlooked facilities across the city. Nevertheless, we applaud the efforts of BMoreFit in beginning to implement programming in schools through the BMoreFit Kit training program. This is a step in the right direction in as much as the environment and conditions for effective fitness training/education already exist. Thus, it is suggested that the immediate goal for

future development lies in aggressively contacting and leveraging partnerships with schools and recreation centers to take advantage of already existing spaces and populations, followed by the continued development of partnerships with other non-profits to expand the network of professionals capable of implementing effective programming.

New Contacts/Potential Partnerships:

Physical educators in Baltimore public schools…

Mia Oberlton 678-471-0644

ROEL G. PAGULONG 443 527 8885

Ms. Audrey Carter Johnson Home-410-485-5413 (cell443-813-5180) work 410-396-4243

Coach Mel Vines 443-831-4695 work 410-396-4243

BCRP Representatives…

Kate Blom 410-396-0008
443-984-4058 (office)

Non-profits…

Desiree Cross 443-857-8578

Nadia Clarke, Director of Field Operations (410) 338-1318

Clinton Kelly 410-296-2100 btpa1@msn.com

Rebecca Winslow 410-889-9622 rebeccawinslow@ymaryland.org

APPENDIX D

BMoreFit Timeline of Key Events

June 15 – July 31 2009 – "Pilot" round of BMoreFit Summer Training Program with "at-risk" youth (ages 18-24) recruited through a partnership with the Mayor's Office foe Employment Development.

November 25, 2009 – Notified of the BMoreFit organization and researched the organization's website.

December 2009 – Sought out further info on the program and potential opportunity to become involved. Conducted research on BMoreFit organization and other non-profits in Baltimore.

January 10, 2010 – Contacted Executive Director of BMoreFit

February 9, 2010 – First meeting with Director

March 5, 2010 – Meeting/Interview with Director

April 2010 – Developed announcement to post of UG listserv to solicit applicants for internship with BMoreFit

April 15th, 2010 – Meeting/Interview with Director

April 2010 – Recruited UM undergrad for internship with BMoreFit for summer training program. Set up internship credits through KNES Dept.

May 16th 2010 – Meeting/interview with Director

June 9, 2010 – Meeting/interview with Talia

June 14 – July 30, 2010 – BMoreFit Summer Training Program
- Participant observation of summer training program
- Interviews conducted with 5 faculty members in BAC
- Informal conversational interviews noted with students

August – September 2010 – Begin discursive mapping of Baltimore voluntary sector
- Meeting/interview with Debbie

November 29, 2010 – Post-program meeting/interviews with Danny and Claude

January – March 2011 – Reading and writing for Dissertation proposal

May 25, 2011 – Dissertation proposal

June 17, 2011 - Meeting/interview with Director

June 2011 – Contacted local and national stores to solicit for donations for Photovoice project

June 24, 2011 – BMoreFit Happy Hour Event

- Announced project to all attendees including former staff and board of directors
- Met privately with 5 former BMoreFit students to ask for their help and interest in participating in a photovoice project.
- Interviews with BMoreFit Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and two Members At-Large.

July 1, 2011 – Met with two more former BMoreFit students from 2009 to discuss photovoice project

June-Sep 2011 – Developed survey instrument and created online option www.surveymonkey.com/s/bmorefit

- Met weekly with four UMD undergraduates to disseminate, promote, and analyze findings from BMoreFit survey instrument.

July 2011 – Wrote announcement letter to publicize efforts of BMoreFit and my team in administering survey and seeking to make a difference in Baltimore communities.

July 2011 - Wrote draft of support letter to be revised and approved by Health Department and Oxiris Barbot, Health Commissioner

July-Aug 2011 – Contacted non-profits, schools, and recs & parks to publicize survey and ask for support: Of note, Get Fit Families LLC, Baltimore LiveHealthy, Living Classrooms, HEAL, Playworks, Healthy Neighborhoods, Squashwise, YMCA.

August 18th, 2011 – Meeting/interview with Jackie Williams (Recreation Cooordinator, BCRP)

September 3, 2011 - Meeting/interview with Talia

September 8, 2011 – Meeting/interviews with Ellie Mitchell and Tim Almaguer (Safe & Sound Organization)

November 26, 2011 - BMoreFit Board meeting

- Gave presentation to board, status update on survey progress and overall situation with the survey research process.

December 8, 2011 – Interviews with BMoreFit Board Member, BMoreFit Treasurer, and one faculty member

February – May 2012 – Made bi-weekly visits to BAC to observe and engage with BAC trainers, attempt to contact former BMoreFit students, and maintain appearances with the Director and members of the Board.

June 2012 – Declined invitation to assist BMoreFit with Teacher ToolKit program

June-August 2012 – Final attempts to contact former BMoreFit students

August – October 2012 – Sporadic contact with Director. Again declined invitation to partipate in Teacher Toolkit program.

November 2012 – Asked Director for a letter to help me establish in-state residency for tuition purposes. Attempts to contact went unanswered.

APPENDIX E
IRB Documentation

Original IRB Proposal

Project Title	**"*BMore Fit*": Examining a Community-based Response to Baltimore's Health Inequities**
Purpose of the Study	*This research is being conducted by Dr. David L. Andrews and Ronald L. Mower at the University of Maryland, College Park.* We are inviting you to participate in this research project because you are involved in the Baltimore Fitness Academy (*BMore Fit*). As a faculty member or student in the program, your participation makes you a potential subject for this research. The purpose of this research project is to explore your participation and involvement in the *BMore Fit* program. This research explores how faculty and students in the program perceive, understand, and experience their day-to-day involvement with *BMore Fit*.
Procedures	The procedures involve faculty members and/or students of the *BMore Fit* program sitting for one or more interviews with the researcher to discuss their experiences in the program. The researcher will be observing the day-to-day activities and interactions of faculty and students for a period of 12-14 months in total (Most importantly observing two cycles of the 8-week summer program). Thus, during the course of daily activities, the researcher may ask you to sit for an interview. Interviews can take place anywhere that you feel comfortable. Each interview lasts between 30 minutes and 1 hour and will be recorded with a digital audio recording device (description of data security and confidentiality are described in the "Confidentiality" section). You can decide to provide any length of time you choose. A maximum of five interviews might be requested with a total time not to exceed 5 hours. The general types of questions we will ask concern your experiences with *BMore Fit* and its members, the manner in which fitness, nutrition, and health knowledge is communicated, and your understanding and perceptions of the program in general. Initial here if you agree to audio-taping this interview: Yes: ____ No: ____
Potential Risks and Discomforts	The potential risks are social. You may be asked to voluntarily sit for an interview. Participation in this research may distinguish you socially from other group members, however every group member can choose whether or not to participate of their own free will. You can refuse to answer any question that you feel uncomfortable answering and can withdraw from participating at any time.
Potential Benefits	We hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study through improved understandings of *BMore Fit* and its members. These understandings may help shape how *BMore Fit* is delivered in the future.

Confidentiality	Any potential loss of confidentiality will be minimized by storing hard-copy data, like papers and notebooks collected in the field, in a secure location (a locked office-storage closet) and digital data, like audio recordings and digital transcripts, on a password-protected computer accessible only to the researchers. Data will be destroyed on February 1st, 2022 in accordance with the University of Maryland's policy on records retention and disposal, which states that records cannot be destroyed less than ten years after collection. February 1st, 2022 is over eleven years from the completion of data collection. If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible. Your information may be shared with representatives of the University of Maryland, College Park or governmental authorities if you or someone else is in danger or if we are required to do so by law.
Right to Withdraw and Questions	Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify. If you decide to stop taking part in the study, if you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or if you need to report an injury related to the research, please contact the investigator, Dr. David L. Andrews at: 359 SPH Building University of Maryland School of Public Health College Park, MD 20742-2611 USA Tel: 301-405-2474 Fax: 208-692-4062 E-Mail: dla@umd.edu **Or, you may also contact the co-investigator (primary correspondent with research participants), Ronald L. Mower at:** **2351 SPH Building** **University of Maryland School of Public Health** **College Park, MD 20742-2611 USA** **Tel: 301-405-2450** **Fax: 301-405-5578** **E-Mail: mower1@umd.edu**
Participant Rights	If you have questions about your rights as a research participant or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact: **University of Maryland College Park** **Institutional Review Board Office** **0101 Lee Building** **College Park, Maryland, 20742**

	E-mail: irb@umd.edu **Telephone: 301-405-0678** This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subjects.	
Statement of Consent	Your signature indicates that you are at least 18 years of age; you have read this consent form or have had it read to you; your questions have been answered to your satisfaction and you voluntarily agree to participate in this research study. You will receive a copy of this signed consent form. If you agree to participate, please sign your name below.	
Signature and Date	**NAME OF SUBJECT** **[Please Print]**	
	SIGNATURE OF SUBJECT	
	DATE	

BMoreFit Sample Interview Questions for IRB Review

Note: As explained in the procedures section, since an open-ended conversational interview format will be used, the following questions represent general guidelines to engage participants in dialogue about their experiences (Lincoln & Denzin, 2000). Thus, it is impossible to provide a comprehensive and specific list of questions that will be asked of participants since they are contingent on the responses received and the topics participants feel inclined to talk about during the interview.

Sample of Interview questions for Instructors

1. How did you become involved with the BMore Fit program?
2. How effective do you think this program is currently? Please explain.
3. What do you think would improve the program overall?
4. What are your impressions of the students?
5. What strategies do you employ in teaching the students about fitness and health?
6. How have the students responded to different forms of instruction?
7. Are there any opportunities for students to engage in dialogue with you or other instructors about the program?
8. Are there any barriers between instructors and students that prevent an effective process of teaching and learning? If so, please explain.

Sample of Interview questions for Students

1. How did you become involved with the BMore Fit program?
2. How effective do you think this program is currently? Please explain.
3. What do you think would improve the program overall?
4. What are your impressions of the instructors?
5. How much has being in the program helped you learn about fitness and health?
6. What forms of instruction help you learn the most? Which do you most enjoy?
7. If you had any concerns about the program, would you feel comfortable talking to faculty members?
8. Are there any barriers between students and instructors that prevent you from getting the most out of the program? If so, please explain.

IRB Approval Notification (was renewed through 11-30-2012)

To: Investigator: David Lawrence Andrews **Co-Investigator(s):** Not Applicable

Student Investigator: Ronald Lee Mower **Department:** KNES - Kinesiology

From: Joseph M. Smith, MA, CIM Manager

University of Maryland, College Park

Re: IRB Application Number: 10-0705 (PAS# 3321) **Project Title:** "'"BMore Fit": Examining a Community-based Response to Baltimore's Health Inequities"

Approval Date: 11-30-2010

Expiration Date: 11-30-2011

Type of Application: New Application

Type of Research: Non-Exempt

Type of Review: Expedited

The University of Maryland, College Park Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved your IRB application. The research was approved in accordance with the University's IRB policies and procedures and 45 CFR 46, the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects. Please reference the above-cited IRB application number in any future communications with our office regarding this research.

Recruitment/Consent: For research requiring written informed consent, the IRB-approved and stamped informed consent document is enclosed. The IRB approval expiration date has been stamped on the informed consent document. Please keep copies of the consent forms used for this research for three years after the completion of the research.

Continuing Review: If you want to continue to collect data from human subjects or analyze data from human subjects after the expiration date for this approval, you must submit a renewal application to the IRB Office at least 30 days before the approval expiration date.

November 30, 2010

Modifications: Any changes to the approved protocol must be approved by the IRB before the change is implemented except when a change is necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects. If you want to modify the approved protocol, please submit an IRB addendum application to the IRB Office.

Unanticipated Problems Involving Risks: You must promptly report any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others to the IRB Manager at 301-405-0678 or

jsmith@umresearch.umd.edu.

Student Researchers: Unless otherwise requested, this IRB approval document was sent to the Principal Investigator (PI). The PI should pass on the approval document or a copy to the student researchers. This IRB approval document may be a requirement for student researchers applying for graduation. The IRB may not be able to provide copies of the approval documents if several years have passed since the date of the original approval.

Additional Information: Please contact the IRB Office at 301-405-4212 if you have any IRB- related questions or concerns.

REFERENCES

ACSM (2014). ACSM, AHA support Federal physical activity guidelines. Retrieved from http://www.acsm.org/about-acsm/media-room/acsm-in-the-news/2011/08/01/acsm-aha-support-federal-physical-activity-guidelines

Adler, P., & Jermier, J. (2005). Developing a field with more soul: Standpoint theory and public policy research for management scholars. *Academy of Management Journal, 48*(6), 941–944.

Alexander, B. K. (2004). Passing, cultural performance, and individual agency: Performative reflections on black masculine identity. *Cultural Studies ⇔ Critical Methodologies*, 4(3), 377-404.

Allen, J. (1996). From Fordism and post-Fordism. In S. Hall, D. Held, D. Hubert & K. Thompson (Eds.), *Modernity: An introduction to modern societies* (pp. 546-563). Oxford: Blackwell.

Althusser, L. (1994). Ideology and the ideological state apparatuses (Notes toward an investigation). In S. Zizek (Ed.), *Mapping ideology* (pp. 100-140). London: Verso.

Amis, J. (2005). Interviewing for case study research. In D. L. Andrews, D. S. Mason, & M. L. Silk. (Eds.), *Qualitative methods in sport studies*. Oxford: Berg Publishers.

Amis, J., & Silk, M. (2005). Rupture: Promoting critical and innovative approaches to the study of sport management. *Journal of Sport Management, 19*, 355-366.

Amis, J., & Silk, M. (2008). The Philosophy and Politics of Quality in Qualitative Organizational Research. *Organizational Research Methods Online*, first published on August 13, 2007.

Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London: Verso.

Andrews, D. L. (1996). The fact(s) of Michael Jordan's blackness: Excavating a floating racial signifier. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, *13*(2), 125-158.

Andrews, D. L. (1999). Dead and Alive?: Sports history in the late capitalist moment. *Sporting Traditions*, 16(1), 73-83.

Andrews, D. L. (2002). Coming to terms with cultural studies. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 26(1), 110-117.

Andrews, D. L. (2008). Kinesiology's Inconvenient Truth: The physical cultural studies imperative. *Quest*, 60(1), 46-63.

Andrews, D. L., & Giardina, M. D. (2008). Sport Without Guarantees: Toward a Cultural Studies That Matters. Cultural Studies <=> Critical Methodologies, 8(4), 395-422.

Andrews, D. L., & Loy, J. W. (1993). British cultural studies and sport: Past encounters and future possibilities. *Quest,* 45(2), 255-276.

Andrews, D. L., Silk, M. L., & Pitter, R. (2008). Physical culture and the polarized American metropolis. In B. Houlihan (Ed.), *Sport in Society* (pp. 284-304). London: Sage.

Andrews, D. L., & Mower, R. L. (2012). Specters of Jordan. *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* First published on March 26, 2012 (iFirst).

Andrews, D. L., Mower, R. L., & Silk, M. L. (2011). Ghettocentrism and the essentialized Black athlete. In D. Leonard (Ed.). *Commodified and Criminalized: New Racism and African Americans in Contemporary Sports.* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Atencio, M., & Wright, J. (2008). "We Be Killin' Them": Hierarchies of black masculinity in urban basketball spaces. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 25(2), 263-280.

Atkinson, M., & Wilson, B. (2002). Bodies, subcultures and sport. In J. Maguire & K. Young (Eds.), *Theory, Sport & Society* (pp. 375-395). Kidlington, Oxford: Elsevier

Science.

Back, L., Crabbe, T., & Solomos, J. (2001). *The changing face of football: Racism, identity and multiculture in the English game*. Oxford: Berg.

Baltimore Believe (2003). A Declaration of Independence from Drugs. Available at: http://www.ci.baltimore.md.us/believe/declaration.html (accessed 1/21/06).

Baltimore City Health Department (2008). Neighborhood health profile information. Baltimore, MD. Retrieved from http://www.baltimorehealth.org/neighborhood.html

Barker, C. (2000). *Cultural studies*. London: Sage.

Baudrillard, J. (1983). *Simulations*. New York: Semiotext(e).

Bauman, Z. (2000). *Liquid modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Beal, B. (1995). Disqualifying the official: An exploration of social resistance through the subculture of skateboarding. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 12(3), 252-267.

Beck, U. (2000). *What is Globalization?* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Berg, B. (2001). *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences* (4th ed.). Boston: Allen & Bacon.

Berry, K. (2011). The ethnographic choice: Why ethnographers do ethnography. *Cultural Studies -- Critical Methodologies, 11*(2), 165-177.

Bennett, T. (2009 [1986]). Popular culture and the "turn to Gramsci". In J. Storey (Ed.), *Cultural theory and popular culture: A reader* (Fourth ed., pp. 81-87). Harlow, Essex: Pearson Education.

Bishop, M. (2008). *Philanthro-capitalism: How the rich can save the world*. London: Bloomsbury Press.

Bochner, A. P. (2000). Criteria against ourselves. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 5, 266-272.

Bonilla-Silva, E. (2002). The linguistics of color blind racism: How to talk nasty about blacks without sounding "racist." *Critical Sociology*, 28(1-2), 41-64.

Booth, D. & Loy, J. (1999). Sport, status, and style. *Sport History Review*, 30, 1-26.

Bordo, S. (1993). *Unbearable weight: Feminism, Western culture, and the body*. University of California Press: Berkeley.

Bordo, S. (1999). *The male body: A new look at men in public and private*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Bourdieu, P. (1977). Structures and the habitus. *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (pp. 72-95). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1978). Sport and social class. *Social Science Information, 17*(6), 819-840.

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. G. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241-258). Westport: Greenwood Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1988). Program for a sociology of sport. *Sociology of Sport Journal, 5*(2), 153-161.

Bourdieu, P. (1990). *In other words: Essays towards a reflexive sociology* (M. Adamson, Trans.). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1993). *The Field of Cultural Production*. Cambridge: Polity.

Bourdieu, P. (2001a). *Practical reason*. Oxford: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P. (2001b) *Masculine domination*. Cambridge: Polity.

Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L. D. (1992). *An invitation to reflexive sociology*. University of Chicago Press.

Boylorn, R. M. (2011). Gray or for colored girls who are tired of chasing rainbows: Race and reflexivity. *Cultural Studies – Critical Methodologies*, 11(2), 178-186.

Brantlinger, P. (1990). *Crusoe's footprints: Cultural studies in Britain and America*. New York: Routledge.

Brayton, S. (2005). "Black-lash": Revisiting the "white negro" through skateboarding. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 22, 356-372.

Brenner, N., & Theodore, N. (2002). Cities and the Geographies of "Actually Existing Neoliberalism". *Antipode, 34*(3), 349-379.

Briggs, C. L. & Hallin, D. C. (2007). Biocommunicability: The neoliberal subject and its contradictions in news coverage of health issues. *Social Text*, 93(25/4), 43-66.

Brown, L., & Rothblum, E. (1989). *Fat oppression and psychotherapy: A feminist perspective*. New York: Hawthorn.

Bryman, A. (1999). The Disneyization of society. *The Sociological Review*, 47(1), 25-47.

Bunton, R. (1997). Popular health, advanced liberalism and *Good Housekeeping* magazine. In A. Peterson, and R. Bunton (Eds.), *Foucault, Health and Medicine* (pp. 223-248). London: Routledge.

Byrne, B. (2009). Not just class: Towards an understanding of the whiteness of middle-class schooling choice. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 32(3), 424-441.

Carrington, B. (2001). Decentering the Centre: Cultural Studies in Britain and its legacy. In T. Miller (Ed.), *A companion to cultural studies* (pp. 275-297). Oxford: Blackwell.

Carrington, B. (2009). Sport without final guarantees: Cultural Studies/Marxism/sport. In B. Carrington & I. MacDonald (Eds.), Marxism, cultural studies and sport (pp. 15-31). London: Routledge.

Castagno, A. (2008). "I don't want to hear that!": Legitimating whiteness through silence in schools. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 39(3), 314-333.

Catalani & Minkler (2010). Photovoice: A review of the literature in health and public health. *Health Education & Behavior*, 37, 424-451.

Caughey, J. (2006). *Negotiating cultures and identities*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Chaddock, G. R. (1999). "Safe Schools at a Price." *Christian Science Monitor*, 24, 15-15.

Cheek, J. (2008). Healthism: A new conservatism? *Qualitative Health Research*, 18(7), 974-982.

Clifford, J. & Marcus, G. (1986). *Writing culture: The poetics and politics of ethnography*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Coakley, J. (2011). Ideology just doesn't happen: Sports and neoliberalism. *Journal of ALESDE,* 1(1), 67-84.

Coffey, A. J. (1999). *The ethnographic self: Fieldwork and the representation of identity*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cole, C. L. (1993). Resisting the canon: Feminist cultural studies, sport, and technologies of the self. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues, 17*(2), 77-97.

Cole, C. L. (1996). American Jordan: P.L.A.Y., consensus, and punishment. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 13(4), 366-397.

Cole, C. L., & King, S. (1998). Representing black masculinity and urban possibilities: Racism, realism, and hoop dreams. In G. Rail (Ed.), *Sport and postmodern times* (pp. 49-86). New York: State University of New York Press.

Cole, C. L., & King, S. (1999). Documenting America: Ethnographies of inner-city basketball and logics of capitalism. In R. R. Sands (Ed.), *Anthropology, sport, and culture* (pp. 147-172). Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.

Colquhoun, D. (1990). Images of healthism in Health-Based Physical Education. In D. Kirk & R. Tinning (Eds.), *Physical education, curriculum and culture: Critical issues in the contemporary crisis*, (pp. 225–251). Philadelphia, PA: Falmer Press.

Cooper, C. (2008). *Community, conflict and the state: rethinking notions of 'safety', 'cohesion' and 'wellbeing'*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Cooper, C. (2009). Rethinking the 'problem of youth': Refocusing on the social and its interrelationship with dominant power structures. *Youth & Policy*, 103, 81-92.

Crawford, R. (1977). You are dangerous to your health: The ideology and politics of victim blaming. *International Journal of Health Services, 7,* 663–680.

Crawford, R. (1980). Healthism and the medicalization of everyday life. *International Journal of Health Services, 10*(3), 365-388.

Crawford, R. (1984). A cultural account of "health": Control, release, and the social body. In J. B. McKinlay (Ed.), *Issues in the political economy of health care* (pp. 60-103). New York: Tavistock Publications.

Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process.* London: Sage.

Dao, J. (2005). Baltimore Street Meaner, but Message is Mixed. *New York Times*, February 9th, A1.

Davidson, M. (1992). *The consumerist manifesto: Advertising in postmodern times*. London: Comedia.

Dean, M. (2010). *Governmentality: Power and rule in modern society*. London, UK: Sage.

DeFrance, J. (1995). The anthropological sociology of Pierre Bourdieu: Genesis, concepts, relevance. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 12, 121-131.

Denison, J., & Markula, P. (2005). The press conference as a performance: Representing Haile Gebrselassie. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 22, 311-335.

Denzin, N. (1978). *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods*. London: Butterworths.

Denzin, N. (1989). *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods* (3rd ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Denzin, N. K. (2014). *Interpretive autoethnography*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (2000). The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (Second ed., pp. 1-32). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.) *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp.1-32). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2008). *The landscape of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.) *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed., pp.1-20). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Derrida, J. (1972). Structure, sign and play in the discourse of the human sciences. In R. Macksey & E. Donato (Eds.), *The structuralist controversy: The languages of criticism and the sciences of man* (pp. 247-265). Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Derrida, J. (1994). *Specters of Marx: The state of the debt, the work of mourning, and the New International*. New York: Routledge.

Deveaux, M. (1996). Feminism and empowerment: a critical reading of Foucault. In S. Hekman (Ed.), *Feminist Interpretations of Michel Foucault* (pp. 211-238). Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Donnelly, P. (2007). Toward a definition of sport subcultures. In A. Tomlinson (Ed.), *The sport studies reader* (pp. 369-374). London: Routledge.

Donovan, D. (2005). Baltimore: The City in Search of a Slogan. *Baltimore Sun*, November 8th, A1.

Donovan, M. S., & Bransford, J. D. (2005). Introduction. In M. S. Donovan & J. D. Bransford (Eds.), *How people learn: History, mathematics, and science in the classroom* (pp. 1–28). Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

Duncan, M. C. (1994). The politics of women's body images and practices: Foucault, the Panopticon, and *Shape* magazine, *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 18(1), 48–65.

Duncan, M. (2008). The personal is the political. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 25, 1-6.

Duncombe, S. (2006). *Dream: Reimagining progressive politics in an age of fantasy*. The New Press.

Dworkin, S. L. & Wachs, F. L. (2009). *Body panic: Gender, health, and the selling of fitness*. New York University Press.

Ellis, C. (2000). Creating criteria: An autoethnographic story. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 5, 273-277.

Ellis, C. (2009). At home with "real Americans": Communicating across the urban/rural and black/white divides in the 2008 presidential election. *Cultural Studies ←→ Critical Methodologies*, 9(6), 721-733.

Ellis, C., Adams, T. E., & Bochner, A. P. (2011). Autoethnography: An overview. *Qualitative Social Research*, 12(1), 1-14.

Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. (2001). Participant observation and fieldnotes. In P. Atkinson, et al. (Eds.) *Handbook of ethnography* (pp. 352-368). Los Angeles: Sage.

Endres, D., & Gould, M. (2009). "I am also in the position to use my whiteness to help them out": The communication of whiteness in service learning. *Western Journal of Communication*, 73(4), 418-436.

England, K. V. (1994). Getting personal: Reflexivity, positionality, and feminist research. *The Professional Geographer,* 46(1), 80-89.

Entine, J. (2000). *Taboo: Why black athletes dominate sports and why were afraid to talk about it*. New York: Public Affairs.

Essed, P. (1994). Contradictory positions, ambivalent perceptions: A case study of a black woman entrepreneur. *Feminism and psychology issue: Shifting identities, shifting racisms*, 99-118.

Evans, J., Evans, B., & Rich, E. (2003). "The only problem is, children will like their chips": Education and the discursive production of ill-health. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society, 11*(2), 215–240.

Fainstein, S., & Gladstone, D. (1999). Evaluating urban tourism. In S. Fainstein & D. Judd (Eds.), *The tourist city* (pp. 21-34). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Fanon, F. (1967). *Black skin and white masks*. New York: Grove Weidenfeld.

Farough, S. D. (2004). The social geographies of white masculinities. *Critical Sociology*, 30(2), 241-264.

Farred, G. (2003). *What's My Name? Black Vernacular Intellectuals.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Farred, G. (2007). The event of the black body at rest: Melee in Motown. *Cultural Critique*, 66, 58-77.

Farred, G. (2008). When kings were (anti-?)colonials: black athletes in film. *Sport in Society*, 11(2/3), 240-252.

Feagin, J. (2006). *Systemic racism: A theory of oppression*. New York: Routledge.

Feagin, J. (2010). *Racist America* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.

Feagin, J. (2013). *The white racial frame*: *Centuries of racial framing and counter-framing* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.

Feagin, J., & O'Brien, E. (2003). *White men on race: Power, privilege, and the shaping of cultural consciousness*. Beacon: Beacon Press Books.

Feagin, J., & Vera, H. (1995). *White racism: The basics*. New York: Routledge.

Featherstone, M. (1991). *Consumer culture & postmodernism*. London: Sage.

Fine & Weis (2008). Compositional studies, in two parts: Critical theorizing and analysis of social (in)justice. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). *The landscape of qualitative research*, (pp. 87-112). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and punish*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Foucault, M. (1986). *The history of sexuality, Vol. 3: The care of the self*. London: Penguin.

Frank, A. W. (1990). Bringing the bodies back in: A decade review. *Theory, Culture & Society,* 7(1), 131-162.

Fraser, M., & Greco, M. (2005). *The body: A reader*. London: Routledge.

Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed.* 30th Anniversary Edition. New York: Continuum.

Frew, M., & McGillivray, D. (2005). Health clubs and body politics: Aesthetics and the quest for physical capital. *Leisure Studies*, *24*(2), 161-176.

Frey, W. H. (1979). Central city white flight: Racial and nonracial issues. *American Sociological Review, 44*(3), 425-448.

Friedman, M. T., Andrews, D. L., & Silk, M. (2004). Sport and the facade of redevelopment in the postindustrial city. *Sociology of Sport Journal, 21* (2), 119-139.

Frow, J. & Morris, M. (2003). Cultural studies. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues* (2nd Edition., pp. 489-539). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Fusco, C. (2005). Cultural landscapes of purification: sport spaces and discourses of whiteness. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 22, 283-310.

Fusco, C. (2006). Spatializing the (im)proper subject: The geographies of abjection in sport and physical activity space. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 30(1), 5-28.

Fusco, C. (2007). 'Healthification' and the promises of urban space. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 42, 43-63.

Galvin, R. (2002). Disturbing notions of chronic illness and individual responsibility: Towards a genealogy of morals. *Health: An Interdisciplinary Journal for the Social Study of Health, Illness and Medicine, 6*(2), 107-137.

Gard, M., & Wright, J. (2001). Managing uncertainty: Obesity discourse and physical educa-

tion in a risk society. *Studies in Philosophy and Education, 20,* 535–549.

Gard, M., & Wright, J. (2005). *The obesity epidemic: Science, morality and ideology*. New York: Routledge.

Gartman, D. (1998). Postmodernism: Or, the cultural logic of post-Fordism. *Sociological Quarterly, 39*(1), 119-137.

Gaztambide-Fernandez, R., & Murad, Z. (2011). Out of line: Perspectives on the "browning" of curriculum and pedagogy. *Journal of Communication and Pedagogy*, 8, 14-43.

Genest, C. M. (2005). 'Cultures, organizations, and philanthropy'. *Corporate Communications*, 10(4), 315-327.

Giardina, M., & Newman, J. (2011). Physical cultural studies and embodied research acts. *Cultural Studies – Critical Methodologies*, 11(6), 523-534.

Gilroy, P. (1991). There ain't no black in the union jack: The cultural politics of race and nation. University of Chicago Press.

Gilroy, P. (2001). *Against race: Imagining political culture beyond the color line*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Giroux, H. (2003). Authoritarianism's Footprint and the War Against Youth. Retrieved on May 4, 2011, from http://facpub.stjohns.edu/~ganterg/sjureview/vol2-1/authoritarianism.html.

Giroux, H. (2004). War Talk, the Death of the Social, and the Disappearing Children: Remembering the Other War. *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies, 4* (2), 206-211.

Giroux, H. (2005). *The terror of neoliberalism*. New York: Palgrave.

Giroux, H. (2006a). *Stormy weather: Katrina and the politics of disposability*. London: Paradigm Publishers.

Giroux, H. (2006b). Cultural studies, critical pedagogy, and the responsibility of intellectuals. In H.A. Giroux (author) and C.G. Robbins (editor) *The Giroux Reader*, (pp. 195-218). Paradigm Publishers: Boulder, CO.

Giroux, H. (2009). *Youth in a suspect society: Democracy or disposability*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Giroux, H. (2012). *Disposable youth: Racialized memories and the culture of cruelty*. London: Routledge.

Giroux, H., & Giroux, S. (2008). Challenging neoliberalism's new world order: The promise of critical pedagogy. In N. Denzin, Y. Lincoln, and L. Smith (Eds.), *Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies* (pp. 181-189). London: Sage.

Giulianotti, R. (2005a). Cultural studies: Hegemony theory beyond resistance. *Sport: A critical sociology* (pp. 43-61). Cambridge: Polity.

Giulianotti, R. (2005b). Bourdieu on sport: *Distinction,* symbolic violence and struggle. *Sport: A critical sociology* (pp. 153-170). Cambridge: Polity.

Goldberg, D.T. (1994). Introduction: Multicultural conditions. In D.T. Goldberg (Ed.), *Multiculturalism: A critical reader* (pp. 1-41). Oxford: Blackwell.

Goodall, H. L. (2000). *Writing the new ethnography*. Lanham MA: AltaMira.

Gottdiener, M., & Budd, L. (2005). *Key concepts in urban studies*. London: Routledge.

Gough, J. (2002). Neoliberalism and Socialisation in the Contemporary City: Opposites, Complements and Instabilities. *Antipode, 34*(3), 405-426.

Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selection from the prison notebooks*, ed. And trans. Q. Hoare and G. Smith. New York: International Publishers.

Gramsci, A. (2009 [1971]). Hegemony, intellectuals and the state. In J. Storey (Ed.)*, Cultural*

theory and popular culture: A reader (Fourth ed., pp. 75-80). Harlow, Essex: Pearson Education.

Gray, G. (2009). The responsibilization strategy of health and safety: Neo-liberalism and the reconfiguration of individual responsibility for risk. *British Journal of Criminology*, 49, 326-342.

Griffin, J. H. (1960). *Black like me*. New York: Buccaneer Books.

Greco, M. (1993) Psychosomatic subjects and the 'duty to be well': Personal agency within medical rationality, *Economy and Society*, 22(3), 357–72.

Grossberg, L. (1986). History, politics and postmodernism: Stuart Hall and cultural studies. Journal of Communication Inquiry, 10 (2), 61-77.

Grossberg, L. (1992). *We gotta get out of this place: Popular conservatism and postmodern culture*. New York: Routledge.

Grossberg, L. (1997). *Bringing it all back home: Essays on cultural studies*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Grossberg, L. (2005). *Caught in the crossfire: Kids, politics, and America's future*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers.

Grossberg, L. (2006). Does cultural studies have futures? Should it? (or what's the matter with New York?): Cultural studies, contexts and conjunctures. *Cultural Studies*, 20(1), 1-32.

Haenfler, R. (2004). Rethinking subcultural resistance: Core values of the straight edge movement. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 33(4), 406-436.

Hall, S. (1980). Encoding/decoding. In S. Hall (Ed.), Culture, media, language: Working papers in cultural studies (1972-1979) (pp. 128-138). London: Hutchinson.

Hall, S. (1981). Notes on deconstructing "the popular". In R. Samuel (Ed.), *People's history and socialist theory* (pp. 227-240). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Hall, S. (1985). Signification, representation, ideology: Althusser and the post-structuralist debates. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 2, 91-114.

Hall, S. (1986a). Gramsci's relevance for the study of race and ethnicity. *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 10(2), 5-27.

Hall, S. (1986b). On postmodernism and articulation: An interview with Stuart Hall. *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 10(2), 45-60.

Hall, S. (1988). The toad in the garden: Thatcherism among the theorist. In C. Nelson & L. Grossberg (Eds.), *Marxism and the interpretation of culture* (pp. 36-73). Basingstoke, UK: Macmillian Education.

Hall, S. (1992a). Cultural studies and its theoretical legacies. In L. Grossberg, C. Nelson, & P. Treichler (Eds.), *Cultural studies* (pp. 277-294). London: Routledge.

Hall, S. (1992b). What is this 'black' in black popular culture? In G. Dent (Ed.), *Black popular culture* (pp. 21-33). Seattle: Bay Press.

Hall, S. (1996). The problem of ideology: Marxism without guarantees. In D. Morley & K. H. Chen (Eds.), *Stuart Hall: Critical dialogues in cultural studies* (pp. 25-46). London: Routledge.

Hall, S. (1997a). The spectacle of the 'other.' In S. Hall (Ed.), *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices* (pp. 223-290). London: Sage.

Hall, S. (1997b). Race, the floating signifier. Media Education Foundation. Retrieved from www.mediaed.org.

Hall, S. (2011). The neoliberal revolution: Thatcher, Blair, Cameron – the long march of neoliberalism continues. *Soundings*, 9-27.

Hall, S., Critcher, C., Jefferson, T., Clarke, J., & Roberts, B. (1979). *Policing the crisis: Mugging, the state, and law and order*. London: Macmillan.

Hall, S. & DuGay, P. (1996). *Questions of cultural identity*. London: Sage Publications.

Hall, T., Coffey, A., & Williamson, H. (1999). 'Self, Space and Place: Youth Identities and Citizenship', *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 20, 501–513.

Hancock, P., & Tyler, M. (2000). Working Bodies. In P. Hancock, B. Hughes, L. Jagger, K. Paterson, R. Russell, E. Tulle-Winton, & M. Tyler (Eds.), *The Body, Culture and Society: An Introduction*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Hannigan, J. (1998). *Fantasy city: Pleasure and profit in the postmodern metropolis*. London: Routledge.

Harding, S. (2004). *The feminist standpoint reader.* London: Routledge.

Hargreaves, J. E. (1987). The body, sport and power relations. In J. Horne, D. Jary & A. Tomlinson (Eds.), *Sport, leisure and social relations* (pp. 139-159). London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Hargreaves, J.A., & McDonald, I. (2000). Cultural Studies and the sociology of sport. In J. Coakley & E. Dunning (Eds.), *Handbook of sports studies* (pp. 48-60). London: Sage.

Hargreaves, J.A., & Vertinsky, P. (2007). Introduction. In J. Hargreaves & P. Vertinsky (Eds.), *Physical culture, power, and the body* (pp. 1-24). London: Routledge.

Harker, Mahar, & Wilkes, (1990). *An introduction to the work of Pierre Bourdieu: The practice of theory*. New York: MacMillan.

Harris, J. C. (2006). Sociology of sport: Expanding horizons in the subdiscipline. *Quest*, 58, 71-91.

Hartmann, D. (2000). Rethinking the relationships between sport and race in American culture:

Golden ghettos and contested terrain. *Sociology of Sport Journal, 17*(3), 229-253.

Hartmann, D. (2001). Notes on midnight basketball and the cultural politics of recreation, race, and at-risk urban youth. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues, 25*(4), 339-371.

Hartmann, D., & Depro, B. (2006). Rethinking sports-based community crime prevention: A preliminary analysis of the relationship between midnight basketball and urban crime rates. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues, 30*(2), 180-196.

Harvard University Civil Rights Project (2001, April). *The Harvard Report on Racial Segregation.*

Harvey, C., Maclean, M., Gordon, J., & Shaw, E. (2011). Andrew Carnegie and the foundations of contemporary entrepreneurial philanthropy. *Business History*, 53(3), 424-448.

Harvey, D. (1989). *The condition of postmodernity: An enquiry into the origins of cultural change.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Harvey, D. (2000). *Spaces of Hope*. Boulder: University of Colorado Press.

Harvey, D. (2001). *Spaces of capital: Towards a critical geography*. New York: Routledge.

Harvey, D. (2005). *A brief history of neoliberalism.* Oxford University Press.

Heal Baltimore Project (2011). Program description. Accessed from www.healbaltimore.org. [Site was removed in 2012].

Hebdige, D. (1979). *Subculture: The meaning of style*. London: Methuen.

Herndon, A. (2002). Disparate but disabled: Fat embodiment and disability studies. *NSWA Journal, 14*(3), 120–137.

Herndon, A. (2005). Collateral damage from friendly fire?: Race, nation, class and the "war against obesity." *Social Semiotics*, 15(2), 127-141.

Heyl, B. S. (2001). Ethnographic interviewing. In P. Atkinson, et al. (Eds.) *Handbook of ethnography* (pp. 369-383). Los Angeles: Sage.

Hill-Collins, P. (1997). Pornography and Black women's bodies. In *Gender violence: Interdisciplinary perspectives* (pp. 395–399). New York: New York University Press.

Hockey, J., & Collinson, J.A. (2007). Grasping the Phenomenology of Sporting Bodies. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 42(2), 115-131.

hooks, b. (1992). *Black looks: Race and representation*. Boston: South End Press.

hooks, b. (1994). Spending culture: Marketing the black underclass. In *Outlaw culture: Resisting representations* (pp. 145-153). New York: Routledge.

Howell, J., & Ingham, A. (2001). From social problem to personal issue: The language of lifestyle. *Cultural Studies*, 15(2), 326-351.

Hughes, B. (2000). Medicalized bodies. In P. Hancock, B. Hughes, L. Jagger, K. Paterson, R. Russell, E. Tulle-Winton and M. Tyler (Eds.), *The Body, Culture and Society: An Introduction* (pp. 12–28). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Hughes, G. (2004). Managing black guys: Representation, corporate culture, and the NBA. *Sociology of Sport Journal, 21*(2), 163-184.

Humphries, B. (2000). From critical thought to emancipatory action: Contradictory research goals?. In C. Truman, D. Mertons, & B. Humphries (eds.). *Research and Inequality* (pp. 179-190). London: Routledge.

Ingham, A. G. (1985). From public issue to personal trouble: Well-being and the fiscal crisis of the state. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 2(1), 43-55.

Ingham, A. G. (1997). Toward a department of physical cultural studies and an end to tribal warfare. In J. Fernandez-Balboa (Ed.), Critical postmoderism in human movement, physical education, and sport (pp. 157-182). Albany: State University of New York

Press.

Jameson, F. (1991). *Postmodernism, or, the cultural logic of late capitalism*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Jameson, F. (1998). *The cultural turn: Selected writings on the postmodern 1983-1998*. London & New York: Verso.

Jamieson, K. (2004). Edinburgh: The festival gaze and its boundaries. *Space & Culture*, 7(1), 64- 75.

Jeffords, S. (1993). *Hard bodies: Hollywood masculinity in the Reagan era*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Jermier, J. M. (1998). Critical perspectives on organizational control. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *43*, 235–256.

Johnson, R., Chambers, D., Raghuram, P. & Tincknell, E. (2004). *The Practice of Cultural Studies.* London: Sage.

Johns Hopkins Institute for Policy Studies. (2000). Baltimore in transition: How do we move from decline to revival? Available at: http://www.jhu.edu/~ips/newsroom/transition.pdf (accessed 17th October, 2003).

Judd, D. & Simpson, D. (2003). Reconstructing the Local State: The Role of External Constituencies in Building Urban Tourism. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 46, 8, 1056-1069.

Jutel, A. (2005). Weighing health: The moral burden of obesity. *Social Semiotics, 15*(2), 113–125.

Keil, R. (2009). The urban politics of roll-with-it neoliberalization. *City,* 13(2-3), 230-245.

Kelley, R. D. G. (1997a). *Yo' mama's disfunktional!: Fighting the culture wars in urban America*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Kelley, R. D. G. (1997b). Playing for keeps: Pleasure and profit on the postindustrial playground. In W. Lubiano (Ed.), *The house that race built*, (pp. 195-231). New York: Vintage Books.

Kellner, D. (1989). *Jean Baudrillard: From marxism to postmodernism and beyond*. Stanford, University of Stanford Press.

Kellner, D. (1991). Reading images critically: Toward a postmodern pedagogy. In H. Giroux (Ed.). Postmodernism, feminism, and cultural politics (pp. 60-82). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Kellner, D. (1997). Critical theory and British cultural studies: The missed articulation. In J. McGuigan (Ed.), *Cultural methodologies*, (pp. 12-41). London: Sage.

Kent, A., & Walker, M. (2010). Testing a schema for strategic philanthropy in sport. *International Journal of Sport Management*, 11, 394-417.

Kincheloe, J. L. (2001). Describing the bricolage: Conceptualizing a new rigor in qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 7, 6, 679-692.

Kincheloe, J. L., & McLaren, P. L. (2005). Rethinking critical theory and qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 303-342). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kincheloe, J. L., & Steinberg, S. R. (2000). Constructing a pedagogy of whiteness for angry white students. In N. M. Rodriguez & L. E. Villaverde (Eds.), *Dismantling white privilege: Pedagogy, politics, and whiteness* (pp. 178–197). New York: Peter Lang.

King, S. (2001). An all-consuming cause: Breast cancer, corporate philanthropy, and the market for generosity. *Social Text*, 69, 19(4), 115-143.

King, S. (2004). Pink Ribbons Inc: Breast cancer activism and the politics of philanthropy. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 17(4), 473-492.

King, S. (2005). Methodological contingencies in contextual sport studies. In Andrews, D., Mason, D. & Silk, M. (Eds). *Qualitative Research in Sports Studies* (pp. 21-38). Oxford: Berg.

King, S. (2008). *Pink Ribbons Inc., Breast cancer activism and the politics of philanthropy*. University of Minnesota Press.

Kirk, D. (2006). The "obesity crisis" and school physical education. *Sport Education and Society, 11*(2), 121–133.

Kirk, D., & Colquhoun, D. (1989). Healthism and physical education. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 10*(4), 417–434.

Kitwana, B. (2005a). *Why white kids love hip-hop: Wanksta, wiggas, wannabees and the new reality of race in America*. New York: Basic Civitas Books.

Kitwana, B. (2005b). *The hip-hop generation: Young blacks and the crisis in African American culture*. New York: Basic Civitas Books.

Klein, N. (2008). *The shock doctrine: The rise of disaster capitalism*. New York: Picador.

Kowal, E., & Paradies, Y. (2005). Ambivalent helpers and unhealthy choices: Public health practitioners' narratives of Indigenous ill-health. *Social Science & Medicine*, 60, 1347-1357.

Kurson, R. (2002). The Best and the Brightest. *Esquire Magazine*, Vol. 138, Issue 6, 150-167.

Langley, A. (1999). Strategies for theorizing from process data. *Academy of Management Review*, *24*(4), 691-710.

Lash, S. & Urry, J. (1994). *Economies of Signs and Space*. London: Sage.

Lefebvre, H. (2003). From the social pact to the contract of citizenship (from Du Contrat de Citoyennete, 1990) (I. Forster, Trans.). In S. Elden, E. Lebas & E. Kofman (Eds.), Henri Lefebvre: Key writings (pp. 238-254). London: Continuum.

Lefebvre, H. (2009 [1968]). *Dialectical materialism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Letts, C., Ryan, W., & Grossman, A. (1997). Virtuous capital: What foundations can learn from venture capitalists. *Harvard Business Review*, 75(2), 36-44.

Lincoln, Y., & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Linder & Associates, Inc (2002). *Baltimore Believe – Progress Report: Phase 1*. New York: Author.

Linsky, A. (2008, October 16). 20-year gap seperates city's poorest, wealthy. *Baltimore Sun*.

Lipsitz, G. (2006). *The possessive investment in Whiteness: How White people profit from identity politics*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Longhurst, R. (2001). *Bodies: Exploring fluid boundaries*. London, UK: Routledge.

Longhurst, R. (2005). Fat bodies: Developing geographical research agendas. *Progress in Human Geography, 29*(3), 247–259.

Lowenheim, O. (2007). The responsibility to responsibilize: Foreign offices and the issuing of travel warnings. *International Political Sociology*, 1, 203-221.

Loy, J. W., Andrews, D. L., & Rinehart, R. E. (1993). The body in culture and sport. *Sport Science Review*, 2(1), 69-91.

Lubinsky, M. & Doherty, A. (2011). Corporate philanthropy toward the community and organizational commitment in the fitness sector. *International Journal of Sport Management and Marketing*, 10(1/2), 1-20.

Lupton, D. (1995). *The imperative of health: Public health and the regulated body*. London: Sage.

Macek, S. (2006). *Urban nightmares: The media, the right, and the moral panic over the city*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

MacLeod, G. (2002). From urban entrepreneurialism to a "revanchist city"? On the spatial injustices of Glasgow's renaissance. *Antipode*, 602-624.

MacLeod, G., Raco, M., & Ward, K. (2003). Negotiating the Contemporary City. *Urban Studies*, 40(9), 1655-1671.

Maddox, G. L., & Liederman, V. (1969). Overweight as a social disability with medical implications. *Journal of Medical Education*, 44, 214-220.

Maguire, J. S. (2008). The personal is professional: Personal trainers as a case study of cultural intermediaries, *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 11(2), 211-229.

Maharaj, G. (1999). Talking trash: Late capitalism, black (re)productivity, and professional basketball. In R. Martin & T. Miller (Eds.), *SportCult* (Vol. 16, pp. 227-240). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Majors, R., & Billson, J. M. (1992). *Cool pose: The dilemmas of black manhood in America*. New York: Lexington Books.

Manalansan (2005). Race, violence, and neoliberal spatial politics. *Social Text*, 84-85, 23(3-4), 141-156.

Marmot, M. (2004). *The status syndrome: How social standing affects our health and longevity*. New York: Owl Books.

Marty, D. (1999). White antiracist rhetoric as apologia: Wendell Berry's The Hidden Wound. In T. K. Nakayama & J. N. Martin (Eds.), *Whiteness: The communication of social identity* (pp. 51–68). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Marx, K. (1977). The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte. In D. McLellan (Ed.), Karl Marx: Selected writings (pp. 300-325). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Massey, D., & Denton, N. (1998). *American apatheid: Segregation and the making of the underclass*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Mbembe, A. (2003). Necropolitics. *Public Culture*, 15(1), 11-40.

McDermott, L. (2007). A governmental analysis of children "at-risk" in a world of physical inactivity and obesity epidemics. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 24, 302-324.

McDonald, M. G. (2005). Mapping whiteness and sport: An introduction. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 22, 245-255.

McDonald, M. G., & Birrell, S. (1999). Reading sport critically: A methodology for interrogating power. *Sociology of Sport Journal, 16*(4), 283-300.

McRobbie, A. (1994). *Postmodernism and popular culture*. London: Routledge.

McIntosh, P. (1989, July/Aug). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. *Peace and Freedom*, 10-12.

Melamed (2006). The spirit of neoliberalism: From racial liberalism to neoliberal multiculturalism. *Social Text*, 89, 24(4), 1-24.

Mennesson, C. (2000). "Hard" women and "soft" women: The social construction of identities among female boxers. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport, 35*(1), 21-34.

Mercer, K. (1994). *Welcome to the jungle: New positions in black cultural studies*. New York: Routledge.

Miller, P. C., & Endo, H. (2005). Journey to becoming a teacher: The experiences of students of color. *Multicultural Education*, *13*(1), 2–9.

Miller, T. (2001). What it is and what it isn't: Introducing....Cultural Studies. In T. Miller (Ed.), A Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Mills, C. W. (1956). *The power elite*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Milner, H. R. (2006). The promise of black teachers' success with black students. *Educational Foundations*, *20*(3–4), 89–104.

Mitchell, N. (1998, December 3).What is meant by historical materialism. *Workers World*. Retrieved from http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/10/035.html.

Monaghan, L. (2005). Big handsome men, bears and others: Virtual constructions of "fat male embodiment." *Body & Society, 11*(2), 81–111.

Monaghan, L. (2008). Men, physical activity, and the obesity discourse: Critical understandings from a qualitative study. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 25, 97-129.

Morvaridi, B. (2012). Capitalist philanthropy and the new green revolution for food. *International Journal of Sociology of Agriculture & Food*, 19(2), 243-256.

Mower, R. L., Andrews, D. L., & Rick, O. (2014). Football and 'ghettocentric' logics?: The NFL's essentialist mobilization of Black bodies. In Z. Furness and T. Oates (Eds.), *The NFL: Critical/Cultural Perspectives*. Temple University Press.

Murray, R. (1990). Fordism and post-fordism. In S. Hall & M. Jacques (Eds.), *New times: The changing face of politics in the 1990s* (pp. 38-53). London: Verso.

Murray, S. (2005). (Un/Be)Coming out? Rethinking fat politics. *Social Semiotics*, 15(2), 153-163.

Nabhan-Warren, K. (2011). Embodied research and writing: A case for phenomenologically oriented religious studies ethnographies. *Journal of the American Academy of Religion, 79*, 278-407.

Nakayama, T. K., & Krizek, R. L. (1995). Whiteness: A strategic rhetoric. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, *81*, 291–309.

Nakayama, T. K., & Martin, J. N. (1998). *Whiteness: The communication of social identity*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Nauright, J. (2013). "We're making the world safe for capitalism": Sport, "development" and neo-imperialism. 2013 Burris F. Husman Memorial Lecture at the University of Maryland, College Park.

Negus, K. (2002). The work of cultural intermediaries and the enduring distance between production and consumption. *Cultural Studies*, 16(4), 501-515.

Newman, J. (2011). [Un]Comfortable in my own skin: Articulation, reflexivity, and the duality of the self. *Cultural Studies ←→ Critical Methodologies*, 11(6), 545-557.

Newman, J., & Falcous, M. (in press). *Proletkul'tist* lament: On the class politics of sport (as culture and commerce). Chapter submitted for publication in B. Carrington & D.

Andrews (Eds.), *The Blackwell companion to sport*. Blackwell Publishers.

Nkrumah, K. (1965). *Neo-Colonialism, The Last Stage of Imperialism*. First Published: Thomas Nelson & Sons, Ltd., London (1965). Published in the USA by International Publishers Co., Inc., (1966).

Omi, M., & Winant, H. (1994). Racial formation in the United States from the 1960's to the 1990's. (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.

Orser, E. (1994). *Blockbusting in Baltimore: The Edmondson Village story*. University Press of Kentucky.

Oyeleye, A. (2014). Lost and found? Globalised neoliberalism and global youth resistance. *Critical Arts: A South-North Journal of Cultural & Media Studies*, 28, 1, p. 57-68.

Pagano, M., & Bowman, A. (1995). *Cityscapes and capital: The politics of urban development*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

Patton, M. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Newbury Park, CA; London: Sage.

Peck, J., & Tickell, A. (2002). Neoliberalizing space. *Antipode*, 380-404.

Pelias, R. J. (2011). *Leaning: A poetics of personal relations*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

Phoenix, A. (1994). Practicing feminist research: The intersection of gender and race in the research process. In M. Maynard and J. Purvis (Eds.), *Researching women's lives from a feminist perspective* (pp. 49-71). London: Taylor and Francis.

Pietila, A. (2010). *Not in my neighborhood: How bigotry shaped a great American city*. Lanham, MD: Ivan Dee.

Pitter, R. & Andrews, D. L. (1997). Serving America's underserved youth: Reflections on sport and recreation in an emerging social problems industry. *Quest,* 49, 89-99.

Polivy, J., Garner, D., & Garfinkel, P. (1986). Causes and consequences of the current preference for thin female physiques. In C. P. Herman, M. P. Zanna and E. T.

Higgins (Eds.), *Physical appearance, stigma and social behavior: The Ontario symposium* (pp. 89-112). Hillsdale, N.J: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Pollock, M. (2004). *Colormute: Race Talk Dilemmas in an American School*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Poppendieck, J. (1998). *Sweet charity: Emergency food and the end of entitlement*. New York: Viking Press.

Poulos, C. N. (2009). *Accidental ethnography*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

Puhl, R., & Brownell, K. (2001). Bias, discrimination, and obesity. *Obesity Research*, 12, 788-805.

Quiocho, A., & Rios, F. (2000). The power of their presence: Minority group teachers and schooling. *Review of Educational Research*, *70*(4), 485–528.

Ramazanoglu, C. & Holland, J. (2002). *Feminist methodology: Challenges and choices*. London: Sage Publications.

Rawlings-Blake, S. (2013, September 16). Rawlings-Blake: No regrets on the Grand Prix. *The Baltimore Sun.*

Rice, C. (2006 [1994]). Out from under occupation: Transforming our relationships with our bodies. In A. Medavoraski & B. Cranney (Eds.), *Canadian woman studies: An introductory reader* (2nd ed.) (pp. 411–423). Toronto: Inanna Publications & Education.

Rice, C. (2007). Becoming the fat girl: Acquisition of an unfit identity. *Women's Studies International Forum, 30*(2), 158–174.

Richardson, L. (2000). New writing practices in qualitative research. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 17(1), 5- 20.

Ricks, J. M. (2005). An assessment of strategic corporate philanthropy on perceptions of brand equity variables. *Journal of Consumer Marketing,* 22(3), 121-134.

Rodriguez, D. (2009). The usual suspect: Negotiating white student resistance and teacher authority in a predominantly white classroom. *Cultural Studies – Critical Methodologies*, 9(4), 483-508.

Rodriguez, D. (2011). Silence as speech: Meanings of silence for students of color in predominantly white classrooms. *International Review of Qualitative Research*, 4(1), 111-144.

Rojek, C. (1995) *Decentring Leisure.* London: Sage.

Rose, N. (1996). Identity, genealogy, history. In S. Hall and P. du Gay (Eds.), Questions of Cultural Identity (pp. 128-150). London: Sage.

Rose, N. (1999). Government and Control. *British Journal of Criminology*, 40, 321-339.

Rose, N. (2000). Community, citizenship, and the third way. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 43(9), 1395-1411.

Rowe, D. (2004). Antonio Gramsci: Sport, hegemony and the national-popular. In R. Giulianotti (Ed.), *Sport and modern social theorists* (pp. 97-110). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Roy, S. C. (2008). 'Taking charge of your health': Discourses of responsibility in English-Canadian women's magazines. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 30(3), 463-477.

Saiia, D. H., Carroll, A. B., & Buchholtz, A. K. (2003). 'Philanthropy as strategy: When corporate charity begins at home. *Business & Society*, 42(2), 169-201.

Sandell, J. (1995). Out of the ghetto and into the marketplace: Hoop Dreams and the commodification of marginality. *Socialist Review, 25*(2), 57-82.

Sandfort, J. (2008). Using lessons from public affairs to inform strategic philanthropy. *Non-Profit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 37(3), 537-552.

Seshadri-Crooks, K. (2000). *Desiring Whiteness: A Lacanian analysis of race*. New York: Routledge.

Shaw, A. (2005). The other side of the looking glass: The marginalization of fatness and Blackness in the construction of gender identity. *Social Semiotics, 15*(2), 143–152.

Shilling, C. (1993). The body and physical capital. *The body and social theory* (pp. 127-204). London: Sage.

Shilling, C. (2003). *The body and social theory*. London: Sage.

Shokeid, M. (1997). Negotiating multiple viewpoints: The cook, the native, the publisher, and the ethnographic text. *Current Anthropology*, *38*(4), 631-645.

Silk, M. (2004). A tale of two cities: Spaces of consumption and the façade of cultural development**.** *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, *28*(4), 349-378.

Silk, M. (2010). Postcards from Pigtown. *Cultural Studies <=> Critical Methodologies,* 10(2), 143-156.

Silk, M. & Amis, J. (2005). Sport tourism, cityscapes and cultural politics. *Sport in Society*, 8, (2), 280-301.

Silk, M., & Andrews, D. (2006). The Fittest City in America. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, *30*(3), 315-327.

Silk, M., & Andrews, D. (2011). Toward a physical cultural studies. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 28, 4-35.

Simon, D. (Dec, 7, 2013). 'There are now two Americas. My country is a horror show'. *The Guardian*. Retrieved on Dec 15, 2013 from http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/dec/08/david-simon-capitalism-marx-two-americas-wire

Slack, J. D. (1996). The theory and method of articulation in cultural studies. In D. Morley & K. H. Chen (Eds.), Stuart Hall: Critical dialogues in cultural studies (pp. 112-127). London: Routledge.

Smith, C. (2003). The new corporate philanthropy. *Harvard Business Review on Corporate Responsibility*, 157-187). Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Smith, S. (1990). Sizism: One of the last "safe" prejudices. *The California Now Activist*. <www.naafa.org/press_room/sizism.html> Accessed 6 December 2006.

Smitherman, G. (1994). *Black talk: Words and phrases from the hood to amen corner*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Sperber, M. (2000). *Beer and circus: How big-time college sports is crippling undergraduate education*. New York: Holt.

Sprigle, R. (1949). *In the land of jim crow*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Storey, J. (2006). Cultural studies: An introduction. In J. Storey (Ed.), *What is cultural studies? A reader* (pp. 1-13). London: Arnold.

Stringer, E. (1997). *Community-based ethnography: Breaking traditional boundaries of research, teaching, and learning*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Squires, G., & Kubrin, C. (2005). Privileged places: race, uneven development and the

geography of opportunity in urban America. *Urban Studies,* 42(1), 47-68.

Swanson, L. (2009). Complicating the "Soccer Mom:" The cultural politics of forming class-based identity, distinction, and necessity. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport, 80*(2), 345-354.

Sykes, H., & McPhail, D. (2008). Unbearable lessons: Contesting fat phobia in physical education. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 25, 66-96.

Tatum, B. (1997). *Why are all the black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?* New York: Basic.

Thomas, S. B., Quinn, S. C., Butler, J., Fryer, C. S., & Garza, M. A. (2011). Toward a fourth generation of disparities research to achieve health equity. *Annual Review of Public Health*, 32, 399-416.

Tomlinson, J. (1999). *Globalization and culture.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Toyosaki, S., Pensoneau-Conway, S. L., Wendt, N. A., Leathers, K. (2009). Community autoethnography: Compiling the personal and resituating whiteness. *Cultural Studies ← → Critical Methodologies*, 9(1), 56-83.

Twine, F. W. (2000). Racial ideologies and racial methodologies. In F. W. Twine, and J. W. Warren (Eds.), *Racing research, researching race: Methodological dilemmas in critical race studies* (pp. 1-33). New York: New York University Press.

Tyler, M., & Abbott, P. (1998). Chocs away: weight watching in the contemporary airline industry. *Sociology,* 32(3), 433–450.

U.S. Census Bureau (2004). Population and Housing Narrative Profile. Available at: http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/NPTable?_ame=ACS_2004_EST_G00_NPO1 (accessed 12/29/05).

Venkatesh, S. (2008). *Gang leader for a day: A rogue sociologist takes to the streets*. New York: Penguin Press.

Virilio, P. (2002). *The Information Bomb*. London: Verso.

Villegas, A. M., Strom, K., & Lucas, T. (2012). Closing the racial/ethnic gap between students of color and their teachers: An elusive goal. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 45(2), 283-301.

Wacquant, L. J. D. (1992). The social logic of boxing in black Chicago: Toward a sociology of pugilism. *Sociology of Sport Journal, 9*(3), 221-254.

Wacquant, L. J. D. (1994). The new urban color line: The state and fate of the ghetto in postfordist America. In C. Calhoun (Ed.), *Social theory and the politics of identity* (pp. 231-276). Oxford: Blackwell.

Wacquant, L. J. D. (1995). Pugs at Work: Bodily Capital and Bodily Labour among Professional Boxers. *Body and Society, 1*(1), 65-93.

Wacquant, L. J. D. (2007). *Urban outcasts: A comparative sociology of advanced marginality*. London: Polity Press.

Wacquant, L. J. D. (2009). *Punishing the Poor: The Neoliberal Government of Social Insecurity*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Wacquant, L. (2010). Crafting the Neoliberal State: Workfare, Prisonfare and Social Insecurity. *Sociological Forum,* 25(2), 197-220.

Wacquant, L. J. D. & Wilson, W. J. (1989). The cost of racial and class exclusion in the inner city. In W. J. Wilson (Ed.), *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 501, The Ghetto Underclass: Social Science Perspectives, 8-25*.

Wang, C. C., & Redwood-Jones, Y. A. (2001). Photovoice ethics: Perspectives from Flint Photovoice. *Health Education & Behavior*, 28(5), 560-572.

Wang, C. C., & Burris, M. (1997). Photovoice: Concept, methodology, and use for participatory needs assessment. *Health Education & Behavior, 24,* 369-387.

Wang, C. C., Cash, J. L., & Powers, L. S. (2000). Who knows the streets as well as the homeless? Promoting personal and community action through photovoice. *Health Promotion Practice, 1*, 81-89.

Wang, C., Morrel-Samuels, S., Hutchison, P. M., Bell, L., & Pestronk, R. M. (2004). Flint photovoice: Community building among youths, adults, and policymakers. *American Journal of Public Health*, 94(6), 911-913.

Ware, V. (2002a). Otherwordly knowledge: Toward a "language of perspicuous contrast'. In V. Ware and L. Back (Eds.), *Out of whiteness: Color, politics, and culture* (pp. 15-32). Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press.

Ware, V. (2002b). Seeing through skin/seeing through epidermalization. In V. Ware and L. Back (Eds.), *Out of whiteness: Color, politics, and culture* (pp. 60-93). Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press.

Watkins, W. (2001). *The White architects of Black education: Ideology and power in America, 1865–1954*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Watts, E. K., & Orbe, M. P. (2002). The spectacular consumption of "true" African American culture: "Whassup" with the Budweiser guys? *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 19(1), 1-20.

Webb, J., Schirato, T., & Danaher, G. (2002). *Understanding Bourdieu*. London: Sage.

Wheaton, B. (2007). After Sport Culture: Rethinking Sport and Post-Subcultural Theory. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 31(3), 283-307.

Wheaton, B., & Beal, B. (2003). Surf divas and skate betties: Consuming images of the "other" in lifestyle sports. In S. Fleming, & I. Jones (Eds.), *New Leisure environments: Media, technology and sport* (pp. 69-90). Eastbourne, UK: Leisure Studies Association.

White, P., Young, K., & Gillett, J. (1995). Bodywork as moral imperative: some critical notes on health and fitness, *Loisir et societe/Society and Leisure*, 18(1), 159–82.

Wiegman, R. (1995). *American anatomies: Theorizing race and gender*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Williams, R. (1977). *Marxism and literature* (pp. 1-7; 11-20; 21-44). Oxford: Oxford University.

Williams, R. (1983 [1958]). *Culture & society: 1780-1950*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Williams, S. J. (1995). Theorising class, health and lifestyles: Can Bourdieu help us? *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 17(5), 577-604.

Williams, D. R., & Collins, C. (2001). Racial residential segregation: A fundamental cause of racial disparities in health. *Public Health Reports, 116*(September-October), 404-416.

Wilson, W. J. (1974). The new black sociology: Reflections on the 'insiders' and the 'outsiders' controversy. In J. E. Blackwell and M. Janowitz (Eds.), *Black sociologists: Historical and contemporary perspectives* (pp. 322-338). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Winfield, A. G. (2007). *Eugenics and education in America: Institutionalized racism and the implications of history, ideology, and memory*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.

Wingfield, A. H., & Feagin, J. (2012). The racial dialectic: President Barack Obama and the white racial frame. *Qualitative Sociology*, first published online March 6, 2012.

Wise, T. (2011). *White like me: Reflections on race from a privileged son*. Berkeley, CA: Soft Skull Press.

Wolcott, H. (2008). *Ethnography: A way of seeing*. New York, NY: Altamira.

Y of Central Maryland Annual Report. (2010). Accessed on May 3, 2011 from http://ymaryland.org

Y of Central Maryland Media Report. (2012, August). Y of Central Maryland and Carefirst Bluecross Blueshield report significant gains in initiative to combat the major public health crisis of childhood obesity. Accessed on May 3, 2011 from http://ymaryland.org

Yousman, B. (2003). Blackophilia and Blackophobia: White youth, the consumption of rap music, and white supremacy. *Communication Theory, 13*(4), 366-391.

Zinn, M. B. (1979). Field research in minority communities: Ethical, methodological, and political observations by an insider. *Social Problems*, 27(2), 209-219.

Zizek, S. (1994). Mapping ideology. London: Verso.

Zizek, S. (2004). *Revolution at the gates: Zizek on Lenin, the 1917 writings*. London: Verso.

Zizek, S. (2009). *First as tragedy, then as farce*. London: Verso.